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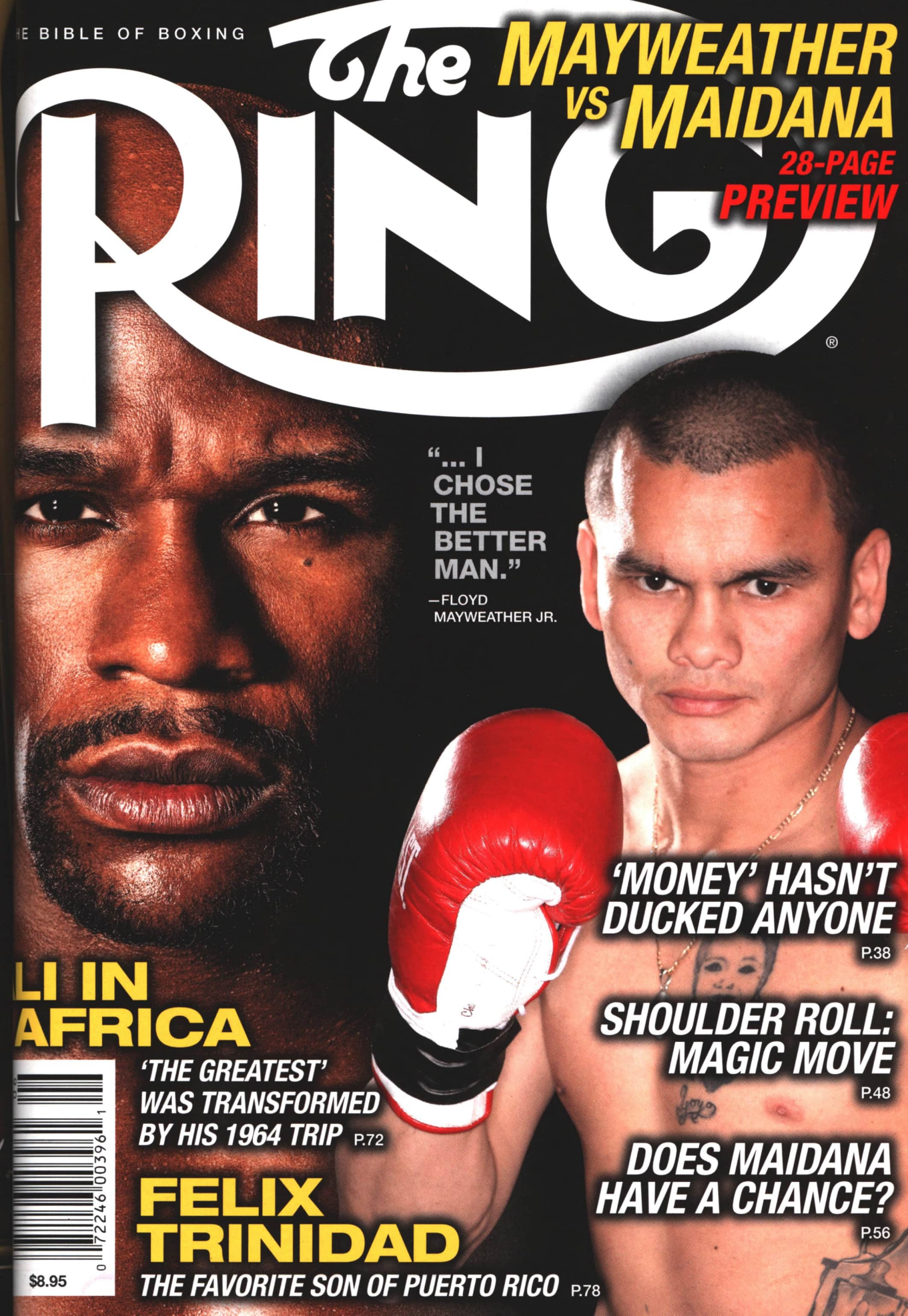

"... I CHOSE THE BETTER MAN."
—FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.

'MONEY' HASN'T DUCKED ANYONE
P.38

SHOULDER ROLL: MAGIC MOVE
P.48

DOES MAIDANA HAVE A CHANCE?
P.56

LI IN AFRICA

'THE GREATEST' WAS TRANSFORMED BY HIS 1964 TRIP P.72

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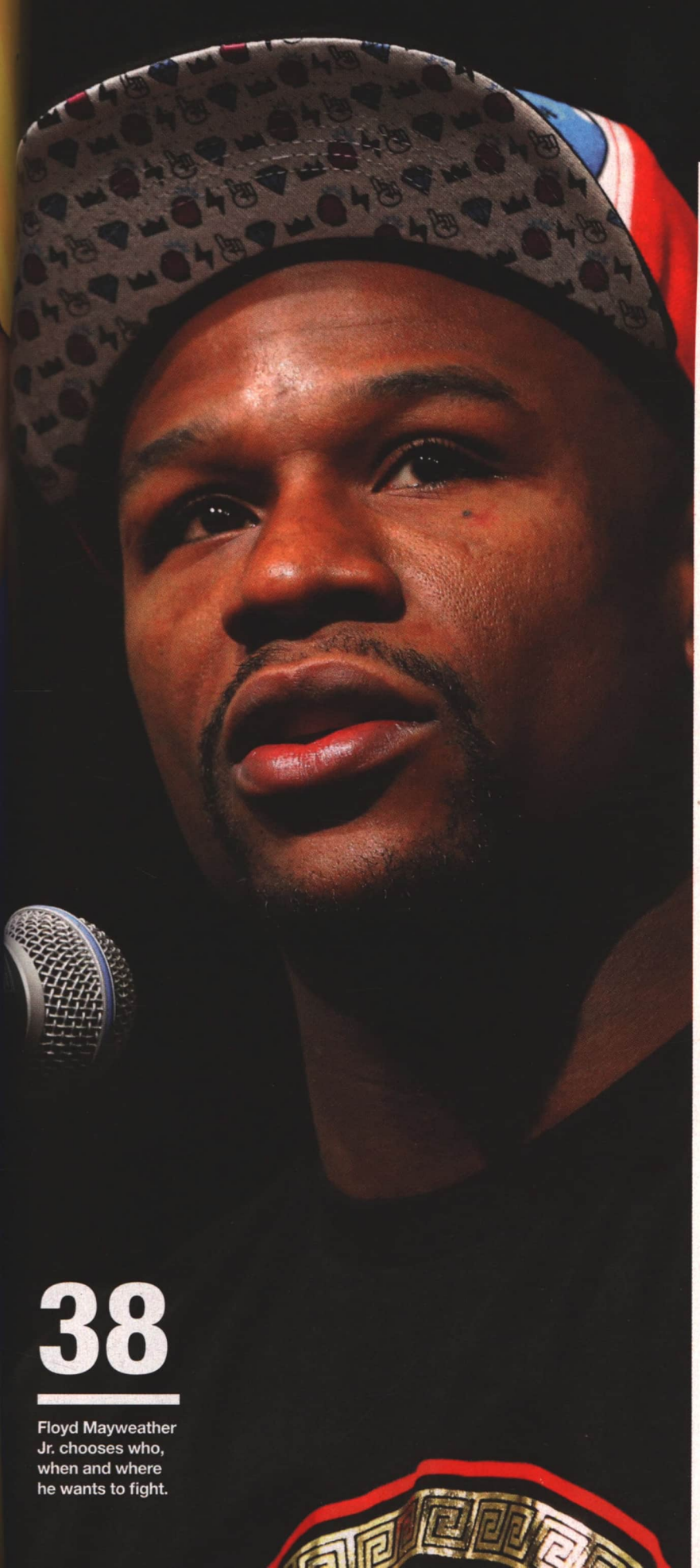

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Floyd Mayweather Jr. chooses who, when and where he wants to fight.

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Amir Khan (here facing Julio Diaz) was left without a dance partner after Floyd Mayweather Jr. decided to fight Marcos Maidana instead.

The RING

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FOUNDER
Nathaniel Fleischer
(1888-1972)

EDITOR
Michael Rosenthal

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Douglass Fischer

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR
Brian Harty

ART DIRECTOR
Lamar Clark

CONTROLLER
Deborah L. Harrison

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
Kenneth J. Gudaitis

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES
Robert Gasparri
213-233-2952
sepub@sepublications.com

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Palm Coast, FL 32164-3122
800-846-6438
thering@emailcustomerservice.com

BACK ISSUES
215-643-3087 OR ONLINE AT
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DIGITAL EDITION INQUIRIES
215-541-2770
Support@bluetoad.zendesk.com

SEND EDITORIAL COMMENTS TO:
comeoutwriting@sepublications.com
or P.O. BOX 251753,
Los Angeles CA, 90025

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THE OTHER PERSPECTIVE

I was putting together a chart of 10 current or potential Hall of Famers who Floyd Mayweather Jr. faced, which was intended to go with RING contributor Ron Borges' column defending Mayweather's body of work, on Page 38.

Then two things occurred to me. One, I could come up with only seven opponents who are either in the Hall of Fame or realistically on their way. Two, I realized that five of the seven were well past their primes when Mayweather fought them and the other two were overrated.

The five (including the age at which they fought Mayweather):

- **Miguel Cotto, 31:** Most people believe Cotto was never the same after he was stopped by Antonio Margarito in 2008. He fought Mayweather in 2012.
- **Shane Mosley, 38:** Mosley was coming off a stunning knockout of Margarito but had clearly lost a step.
- **Juan Manuel Marquez, 36:** This was a disaster from the moment they signed. Marquez was too old but also too small and too slow.
- **Oscar De La Hoya, 33:** De La Hoya was coming off his last good performance, a knockout of Ricardo Mayorga, and clearly was in decline.
- **Genaro Hernandez, 32:** Hernandez never fought again after losing a one-sided decision in 1998.

The two overrated fighters:

- **Arturo Gatti, 33:** We all loved the current Hall of Famer's heart but he was limited overall.
- **Ricky Hatton, 29:** Hatton was another spirited fighter but didn't have the talent of those mentioned above.

Then there are those Mayweather could've – but didn't – face. Here's a list of 10 (in alphabetical order): Joel Casamayor, Leonard Dorin, Acelino Freitas, Vivian Harris, Stevie Johnston, Margarito, Manny Pacquiao, Paul Spadafora, Kostya Tszyu and Paul Williams.

All of them would've been worthy opponents, but let's be honest: The only omission on his resume people will remember is Pacquiao because the others – with the possible exception of Tszyu – were hardly great.

And Mayweather did face a few fighters who were deemed significant risks. That includes Diego Corrales, a feared slugger; Jose Luis Castillo in their second fight; and Zab Judah because of his athleticism. One could even argue that Hernandez and De La Hoya fall into that group even if they were in decline. They were still capable and experienced.

I need to be clear: I believe that Mayweather is a great fighter, probably the best of his era. He proved that with one dominating performance after another against good opposition.

That said, I personally won't rank him among the very best ever – with the likes of Sugar Ray Robinson or Muhammad Ali or Sugar Ray Leonard or Roberto Duran – for one reason: He didn't face a single great opponent in his prime.

That's not his fault to a good extent: If the 10 fighters listed above are any indication, he fought in a weak era. Still, we must judge him by the facts on his resume.

Canelo Alvarez (right) used Alfredo Angulo's easy-to-hit face to prove that he had moved past his loss to Floyd Mayeather Jr.

Nothing controversial this time. Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. (left) landed more than enough leather on Bryan Vera to earn a unanimous decision in their March 1 rematch.

Nihito Arakawa (right) had the courage but not the skill to contend with Jorge Linares on the Canelo Alvarez-Alfredo Angulo card.

COME OUT WRITING

TRUE HEROES

The "Hand to Hand Combat" article in your April edition was an outstanding read. It was very interesting to learn that all of the military academies require boxing as part of their overall curriculum. The goal of these programs is not to produce professional or Olympic-caliber amateur boxers. Rather it is to instill in these brave men and women the physical and mental fortitude needed to defend this country with their lives. It is reassuring to see that these true heroes are being trained in the life skills that only the "sweet science" can afford an individual.

Matt Hilgeman
Independence, Ky.

DON'T FORGET USCG

As a boxing fan in the Central Pennsylvania area, I have been fortunate enough to see the Penn State Boxing Club host collegiate regionals for the past several years. As a Marine Corps veteran, I am extremely pleased that the region includes two of the three service academies that you highlighted in the April issue – West Point and Annapolis. It also includes a service academy that you omitted – the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. Not only do the young men and women of the USCG get in the ring, stand toe to toe and trade leather just as fiercely as the other academies, they stand proudly and vigilantly as the first line of defense on our nation's shores and waterways. There is no such thing as a "Peacetime Coast Guard;" they are always out there. Let us not forget that there are five branches of the U.S. military.

Wilbur L. Walk Jr.
Altoona, Pa.

A VOTE FOR MALIGNAGGI

Time to give Paulie Malignaggi his due. He is without question the best boxer-turned-analyst of all time. While I'm no fan of his pre-fight trash talk, I have to admit his work analyzing fights is top notch. During the recent Luis Collazzo-Victor Ortiz fight, he commented how Ortiz needed to slow down half a beat as he appeared over-eager. Sure enough, the next round he gets knocked out being overly aggressive. Time and time again his calls are spot on. Great job, Paulie. Now about those Shermanesque prefight rants ...

Randy Cook
Cherry Hill, N.J.

GOOD STOPPAGE

Credit must go to Tony Weeks for his perfect stoppage of the Canelo Alvarez-Alfredo Angulo fight. The result had long been established. All that was left was for Angulo to take more punishing head shots. Fights in which one fighter takes a prolonged beating but doesn't appear to get seriously hurt are one of the hidden dangers in boxing. It takes a good referee like Weeks to identify these situations and protect the fighter. Referees and judges are rightly criticized for their mistakes, but good officiating must also be highlighted.

Collin Nefdt
Sandton, South Africa

STEELE WAS RIGHT

Congratulations in advance to Oscar De La Hoya, Felix Trinidad, Joe Calzaghe and Richard Steele, one of the best referees of all time, for being inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in June. Steele is a remarkable man and deserves to be in the Hall of Fame. I never knew the history of Steele until I read about him in THE RING Magazine (April 2014). In regard to the fight between Meldrick Taylor and Julio Cesar Chavez, I feel that Steele was not aware of how much time was left in the fight and did the right thing by stopping it. Everyone knows Taylor was never the same after that fight. It is my opinion that Taylor's corner should have stopped the fight around the eighth round. Even though their man was ahead on points, he was getting hurt and not hurting Chavez at all. His corner let the fight go on hoping he would win a world title. I think if his corner had stopped the fight, he would've had a longer and healthier career.

Angelo C. Colella
Lynn, Mass.

OLSON UNDERRATED

A comment made in "First Losses" (April 2014) about Bobo Olson never being the same after the Archie Moore fight was incorrect. It must be remembered that four of Olson's seven knockout losses came against Sugar Ray Robinson and Moore, both of whom scored more than 100 knockouts. After losing the title and rematch to Robinson, Olson went on to have a successful career at light heavyweight and was rated by this magazine. Even in his mid- to late-30s, Olson was still good enough to beat Wayne Thornton, Piero Del Papa and Andy Kendall, all future light heavyweight title challengers. Olson might not be among the best, but he gets my vote as the most underrated middleweight champion.

Ed Seneca
Harrisburg, Pa.

Editor's note: Olson (97-16-2, 47 knockouts) was 28-9-2 after he was stopped by Moore in three rounds in 1955. He did beat some solid fighters but never again fought for a title and was stopped five times during that period. Olson was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 2000.

WRITE TO THE RING!

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JABS & STRAIGHT WRITES

BY THOMAS HAUSER

Heavyweight Artur Szpilka is clearly not enjoying himself at this moment.

THE PAIN GAME

THE SWEET SCIENCE ISN'T ALWAYS SO SWEET

On April 17, 1860, in Farnsborough County west of London, England's Tom Sayers and John Heenan of San Francisco fought to a bloody, 42-round draw in what was then called "The Fight of the Century." Late in the contest, Sayers was barely able to defend himself, while Heenan was blind in one eye and his other eye was rapidly closing.

Commenting on the scene, New York tavern owner and boxing entrepreneur Harry Hill observed, "Heenan tried to laugh two or three times after Sayers had cut him bad. But upon my soul, his face was so out of shape, you couldn't tell whether he was laughing or crying."

Fighters absorb punishment in the ring. That's the reality of boxing. After Sam Langford was knocked out by Harry Wills, the beaten fighter explained, "You know, iron breaks now and then. And my jaw ain't iron."

Sonny Liston said of his profession, "Fighting ain't fun. It's like war. If I could do something else, I would. I don't like earning my living getting hurt."

Lennox Lewis put matters in perspective when asked recently if he misses being an active fighter.

"That's like asking a guy if he misses getting punched in his face," Lennox answered. ★

ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES

The never-ending exploration of Mike Tyson's psyche continued earlier this year with a fine article by Don McRae in *The Guardian*. One passage offers a clue regarding Tyson's physicality with women and is particularly interesting.

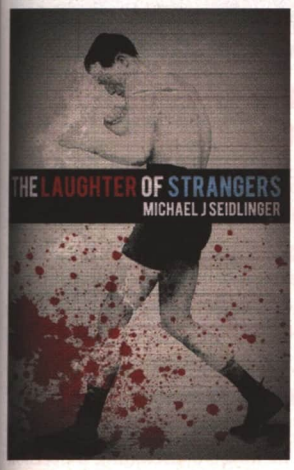
Mike Tyson with former wife Robin Givens

Tyson told McRae: "Once, my mother was fighting with this guy, Eddie. And it's barbaric. Eddie knocked out her gold tooth, and me and Denise [Tyson's sister] are screaming. But my mother's real slick. She puts on a pot of boiling water. The next thing I know, she's pouring boiling water over Eddie. He was screaming, his back and face covered in blisters. So you see, I used to look upon women as being equal in a physical confrontation. I remember my mother – boom! boom! – attacking these men. I would take women very seriously. If you sleep, they might kill you." ★

Top Rank CEO Bob Arum has a knack for comparisons

In recent months, promoter **Bob Arum** has been prone to view boxing in geopolitical terms. During the kick-off press tour for Pacquiao-Bradley II, he likened **Manny Pacquiao** to Winston Churchill and **Floyd Mayweather Jr.** to Adolph Hitler. Then he was asked what he'd heard about **Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.**'s efforts to make the 168-pound limit for his March 1 rematch against Bryan Vera.

"It's like dealing with North Korea," Arum answered. "You don't know what to believe."



The Laughter of Strangers by Michael J. Seidlinger (Lazy Fascist Press) is a quirky novel.

Seidlinger tells the first-person story of Sugar Willem Floures, an aging fighter on the decline, through impressions or snippets. Call them what you will. After reading 50 pages, I found myself saying, "This guy knows boxing. I like this book." Then, like a past-his-prime fighter struggling after some strong early rounds, the book implodes. Other readers might feel differently. I stopped caring about the characters and, eventually, I stopped reading.

That said, Seidlinger is an intriguing writer. So let me offer a sampling of the thoughts expressed in the early chapters of *The Laughter of Strangers*:

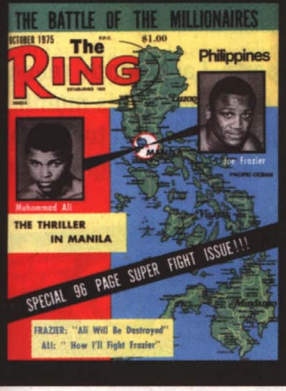
"Nothing is brighter than the lights shining on the ring on fight night ... They watch the other guy, who does everything I do but maybe a little bit better ... I had a chin. Cast-iron. Now I can hear glass shatter whenever I take one to the jaw ... One of those straights that pushes through your gloves, causing your gloves to shoot back towards you and away, parting the sea as the powerful strike lands right on your nose. When it lands, there's little more than a tickle. It starts at the point of impact, the bridge of the nose. Feel it as it expands, impact warm. And the dots, they swarm your vision until you don't see much of anything. If you're lucky, you are still standing and fighting back. But lately I haven't been up on luck ... Take a nap. The ring might as well have been a queen-sized bed. I was out cold."

"I'm going to keep applying pressure to the wound on my forehead and I'm not going to look in any mirrors. ... A rematch. What does it mean when I go pale, flush with fear, at such a thought? ... The world might not care much longer. That's what bleeds the most, hurts the deepest. The thought that every punch landed, every punch absorbed, every scar carved into my skin, will be as insignificant as the dead buried six feet under. Some want infamy. Some want fame. Some fight. Some love. Some follow rather than lead. Everybody wants to be remembered. ... You probably already know what's going to happen. You know where this is going, right? ... It is bad. I'm just not going to admit it until I have to. ... You know, but you don't understand."

Good writing, right?

Call this a strange review of a strange book. ★

QUICK QUIZ



1. WHO IS THE ONLY FIGHTER TO SCORE AN OFFICIAL KNOCKDOWN AGAINST FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.?

2. WHO WAS THE HEAVIEST HEAVYWEIGHT TITLEHOLDER EVER?

« **3.** ALI-FRAZIER III – "THE THRILLA IN MANILA" – MIGHT HAVE BEEN THE MOST EXCITING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT EVER. HOW DID THE SCORECARDS READ WHEN THE BOUT WAS STOPPED AFTER 14 ROUNDS?

QUICK QUIZ ANSWERS:

1. Carlos Hernandez was credited with a knockdown against Mayweather in Round 6 of their WBC Junior lightweight title bout on May 26, 2001. Hernandez landed a series of body shots and Mayweather responded with a left hook that landed high on Carlos' head. The punch appeared to damage Mayweather's hand more than Hernandez's head. Floyd bent over in pain, at which point his left glove touched the canvas. Referee Dale Grable called it a knockdown. By contrast, Zab Judah appeared to score a second-round knockdown against Mayweather in their IBF welterweight title bout on April 8, 2006, when a right hook knocked Mayweather off balance and his glove touched the canvas. But Richard Steele didn't call it.

2. Nikolai Valuev, who tipped the scales at 328 pounds for his WBA title defense against Monte Barrett on Oct. 7, 2006.

3. Ali was ahead on the scorecards by a 66-60, 67-62, 66-62 margin.

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book (*Straight Writes and Jabs: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing*) has just been published by the University of Arkansas Press.

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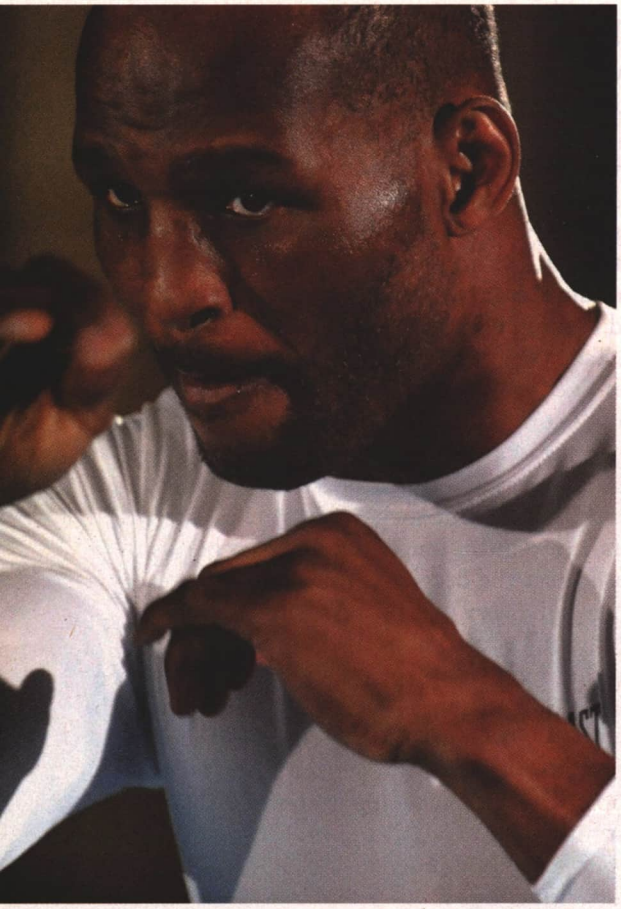


Bernard Hopkins will join some select company in the sports world if he continues to fight past 50.

A MONTHLY BOXING LIST

10

This month: BERNARD HOPKINS will turn 50 next Jan. 15, which arguably will make him the greatest professional athlete at 50-plus in history, if he remains active. Here are other remarkable athletes who succeeded in their respective sports at a half-century or older.

ALBERT BECKLES, bodybuilding – The native of Barbados won the Niagara Falls Pro Invitational in 1991 at 61 years old.

SKIP HALL, MMA – Took part in seven matches after turning 53, winning three times (twice at 54 and once at 57)

GORDIE HOWE, NHL – Howe was 52 when he played a full season for the Hartford Whalers in 1979-80. He scored 15 goals.

NANCY LIEBERMAN, WNBA – The Hall of Famer played one game for injury-depleted Detroit in 2008. She was 50.

DIANA NYAD, swimming – The 64-year-old isn't a competitor, per se, but you try to swim from Cuba to Florida.

SAOUL MAMBY, boxing – Mamby went 2-3 against modest opposition after turning 50, including a decision loss at 66 in 2008.

SATCHEL PAIGE, MLB – The legendary Negro League player competed in one game for Kansas City in 1965, pitching three shutout innings at the age of 59.

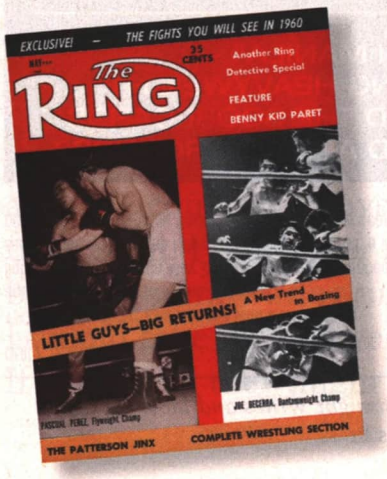
MORGAN SHEPHERD, car racing – The 44-year-veteran of NASCAR remains an active stock car driver at 72.

SAM SNEAD, golf – Snead won the 1965 Greater Greensboro Open at the age of 52, making him the oldest ever to win on the PGA Tour.

JOHN WHITTEMORE, track and field – Took part in his final competition – in the javelin and discus throws – at 104.

ADVANCED DEGREES

Degrees of separation between fighters of the past and their more contemporary counterparts. Last month, reader Adam Molnar connected flyweight Jimmy Wilde to heavyweight George Foreman in only nine steps. This month, staying with a similar theme, reader Gregg Morgan of Swansea, Wales, connected the fighters believed to be the shortest and tallest titleholders ever – Pascual Perez (4 feet 11 inches) and Nikolai Valuev (7 feet) – in eight steps.



« **PASCUAL PEREZ** fought …
BERNARDO CARABALLO who fought …
ERNESTO MARCEL who fought …
ROBERTO DURAN who fought …
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BERNARD HOPKINS who fought …
ROY JONES JR. who fought…
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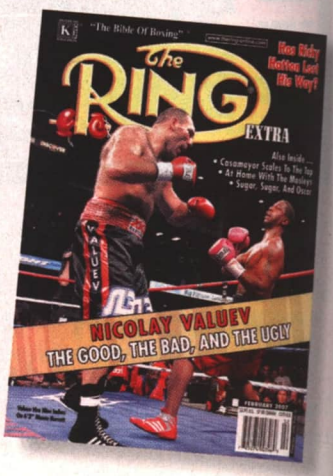
NICOLAI VALUEV »



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GOOD, BAD, WORSE

THE BEST AND WORST IN BOXING FROM THE PAST MONTH

By **Michael Rosenthal**

GOOD

Those who were around during the heyday of boxing at The Forum had to smile when they learned the sport would return to the refurbished arena in Inglewood, Calif., as the the site of a May 17 fight between Juan Manuel Marquez and Mike Alvarado. The Forum was once the home of the NBA's Lakers and NHL's Kings but also was the site of many great fights. The one that stands out in my mind was the 1996 war between Marco Antonio Barrera and Kennedy McKinney – the first HBO *Boxing After Dark* main event – but there were countless more. The Forum became an instant relic when Staples Center opened in 1999, hosting only occasional events. However, The Madison Square Garden Company bought the arena in 2012 and brought it up to date. The Marquez-Alvarado fight will be the first there since 2004. A fight between Gennady Golovkin and Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. could also land in Inglewood. Let's hope there are many more.

BAD

We apparently will never see Vitali Klitschko in a boxing ring again. Is that "bad"? Maybe "sad" is a better word to use, as it usually is when an admired future Hall of Famer decides to hang up his gloves. Klitschko, 42, reportedly told a Ukrainian television station in March that he will not return to boxing. So ends the career of a three-time titleholder and perhaps the best heavyweight of his era. In his case, we won't have to wonder what he will do with his time. Klitschko the politician is now focused on shaping the destiny of his troubled country. Russia last month annexed Crimea, which had been part of Ukraine. And the fate of the rest of country and region seemed to be up in the air as we went to press. No one knows what the Ukrainian leaders – including Klitschko – will accomplish in the face of Russian might. We do know one thing, though: In Klitschko, the Ukrainians have a leader who is a true fighter. Any boxing fan could tell you that.

WORSE

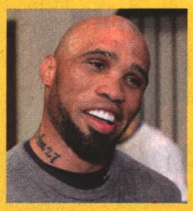
There are enough scandals in boxing without having to invent one. That was the case with the reaction by some to referee Tony Weeks' stoppage of the Canelo Alvarez-Alfredo Angulo fight on March 8. Alvarez had pummeled Angulo for nine-plus rounds when, after a single, but hard left uppercut, Weeks decided that Angulo had taken enough punishment and stopped the fight. The stoppage was awkward because few fights are ended following a single punch that did minimal damage. There's a big difference between awkward and scandalous, though. The fact is that Angulo had taken a bad beating for 27-plus minutes and seemed to have little chance of winning the fight, factors that often move a referee to protect the recipient of the pounding. Bottom line: The stoppage was 100 percent justified. Weeks did his job. I still don't understand why Showtime and some boxing writers made such a big deal out of it.

HOPKINS/SMITH: ETHAN MILLER/GETTY IMAGES; JEAN: PATRICK SMITH/GETTY IMAGES; TOMLINSON: MARK DADSWELL/GETTY IMAGES

FIGHTERS' FAVORITES

WHAT BOXERS ARE INTO OUTSIDE THE SPORT

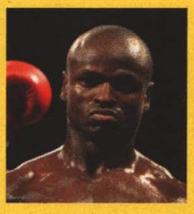
By **Anson Wainwright**



ISHE SMITH

Junior middleweight contender

MUSIC – "R&B or alternative like Lighthouse, stuff like that." ★ **CAR –** "I'm a Dodge man. I've owned a lot of Dodges in my life." ★ **FOOD –** "Italian." **TATTOOS –** "I think I've got seven. One is my sister's birthday. One is of my kids' names on a scroll. One is Jesus, who's the center of my life. One is of my favorite verse on my neck [Psalm 27]." ★ **ATHLETE OUTSIDE BOXING –** "I like Tiger Woods, Wayne Rooney, Ray Lewis." ★ **MOVIE –** "*Napoleon Dynamite.*" ★ **VIDEO GAME –** "It would have to be *Call of Duty* or *Black Ops.*"



DIERRY JEAN

Junior welterweight contender

MUSIC – "Most urban music." ★ **CAR –** "I presently own a (Honda) Civic and soon to be owner of a Bentley." ★ **FOOD –** "I love Haitian cuisine." ★ **TATTOOS –** "I have one on my left forearm. It is the name of my daughter, Alyssia." ★ **ATHLETE OUTSIDE BOXING –** "Lebron James." ★ **MOVIE –** *"Menace II Society."* ★ **VIDEO GAME –** "*Call of Duty.*"

WILL TOMLINSON

Junior lightweight contender

MUSIC – "It changes a lot, but right now Kanye and ASAP Rocky." ★ **CAR –** "Mercedes Benz C63 AMG." ★ **FOOD –** "Right now burgers and Mexican food." ★ **TATTOOS –** "I've got a smiley face tattooed on the inside of my bottom lip." ★ **ATHLETE OUTSIDE BOXING –** "Michael Jordan." ★ **MOVIE –** "*Man on Fire.*" ★ **VIDEO GAME –** "I'm not really into video games, but I used to like playing *Mario Kart.*"

RING POLL

A MONTHLY POLL OF OUR RINGTV.COM READERS

RingTV.com readers don't give the underdog much of a chance against the No. 1 fighter in the world? We asked: **What will be the result of the Floyd Mayweather Jr.-Marcos Maidana fight on May 3?** Here is how you responded.

THE PERCENTAGES:

MAYWEATHER BY KO	12.94
MAYWEATHER BY DECISION	60.2
MAIDANA BY KO	21.66
MAIDANA BY DECISION	4.07
DRAW	1.13

Note: 6,111 readers voted

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Corona Extra BOXING

RING CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH

Carla Daniela

Height:
5 feet 9 inches

Weight:
125 pounds

Measurements:
32-25-36

Stance: Orthodox

Reach: 24 inches

Favorite boxer:
Canelo Alvarez

Hometown:
Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.

Corona Extra
BOXING

RING CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH

Steve Alan

Corona Extra
BOXING
RING CARD GIRL OF THE MONTH

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By David Greisman

KHAN TAKES IT ON THE CHIN AGAIN

HE COULD'VE FOUGHT ALEXANDER FOR A TITLE BUT WAITED FOR MAYWEATHER AND THEN CAME UP EMPTY

Time and again, hubris has been the downfall of Amir Khan, who is overconfident despite his flaws and who ultimately winds up on the end of a devastating blow that he should've seen coming.

Once again, Khan is taking it on the chin. He has not fought since April of last year. He did not fight Devon Alexander for a world title last year. He will not be fighting Floyd Mayweather Jr. this May. He spent too much time yearning for a huge payday and not enough time earning one.

He wasn't going to earn the Mayweather fight with a 2-2 record in his past four bouts. In his last appearance, against Julio Diaz, Khan took yet another trip to the canvas and took a close decision on the scorecards. Contrast that with the man Mayweather is instead fighting, Marcos Maidana, whose own move to welterweight started poorly with a loss to Devon Alexander but whose 4-0 streak since then culminated last December with a highly visible victory over Adrien Broner.

Reputation is based on results. Khan could've punched his own ticket by agreeing to face Alexander on a show that took place one week before Broner-Maidana. Instead, Shawn Porter stepped in and defeated Alexander when it could've been Khan notching a notable win at 147 and having a world title to show for it. And he truly needed a persuasive performance to dispel his doubters. As the cliché goes, actions speak louder than words.

Without those actions, Khan turned to lobbying publicly and desperately, arguing that his style and speed could give Mayweather trouble. That's not why Mayweather would take the fight, though. The only reasons Mayweather was considering him are because he knew Khan could bring fans over from the United Kingdom — and because he knew Khan couldn't beat him.

But Mayweather doesn't need much help moving the needle at the box office. What he needs is someone who can inject some extra oomph into the pay-per-view revenue. Those who don't know better will look at Maidana's victory over Broner and watch to see whether lightning can strike twice. Those who know better will watch to see just how Mayweather moves to 46-0.

That wouldn't be the case with Mayweather-Khan. We knew how that would end, or at least we based our conclusion on the fighters as we know them. If Khan wanted to succeed in convincing Mayweather to fight him, then he should have started by convincing us that he deserved it.

★

It would be fitting if Vasyl Lomachenko and Gary Russell Jr. end up facing each other for a vacant title. After all, they are two talented featherweights who are otherwise on the opposite ends of the spectrum.

Lomachenko won two Olympic gold medals. Russell passed out before the weigh-in at the 2008 Games and had to withdraw. Russell turned pro five years ago and has fought two dozen times against completely outmatched opposition. Lomachenko had six fights in the World Series of Boxing, debuted on American airwaves just last October and then challenged veteran titleholder Orlando Salido in March.

Amir Khan has taken concussive blows in and out of the ring, including one from Julio Diaz in his most recent fight.

Yes, Lomachenko lost to Salido, and Russell remains undefeated. But Lomachenko didn't lose much in defeat, while Russell hasn't gained much in his victories.

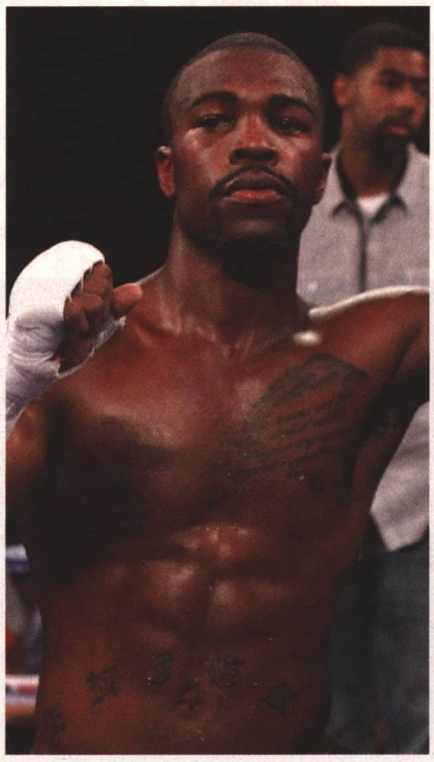
Lomachenko's gambit got people talking. Salido has long been a litmus test at 126, an opponent who measures whether a fighter's future at featherweight will be positive or negative. There was a time that Yuriorkis Gamboa and Juan Manuel Lopez were expected to fight. Gamboa beat Salido, but Salido subsequently stopped Lopez. "Triangle theory" often shouldn't apply in boxing, given that Muhammad Ali beat George Foreman, who beat Joe Frazier, who beat Ali. Nevertheless, Salido exposed Lopez's shortcomings.

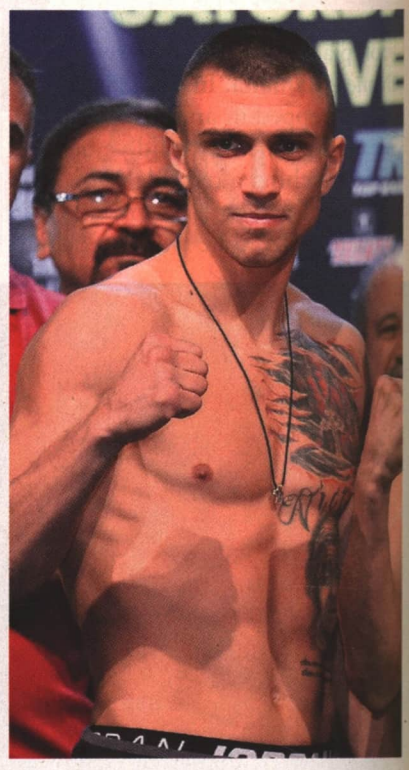
What was already a respectable challenge for Lomachenko, then, got even more difficult when Salido came in overweight, ballooned massively by fight night and then used his size and experience advantages to, well, take advantage of Lomachenko.

Lomachenko had to deal with an opponent who could put more weight behind his shots and was better able to take punches. Salido not only was above the limit but often went below the belt, hitting Lomachenko with as many fouls as referee Laurence Cole would allow, which was too many.

Lomachenko's limits were exposed, but his pedigree and potential also were on display. He did not respond well to Salido's body attack or fouls, he held far too much, and his uppercut was virtually nonexistent. Yet he remained in the fight, battled back, began to catch up on the scorecards and had Salido in tremendous trouble in the final round.

But here's the thing:





Are former amateur stars Gary Russell Jr. (left) and Vasyl Lomachenko on a collision course?

Lomachenko's ambition could have backfired on him, and Russell's play-it-safe approach might end up working out in his favor. The great thing about boxing is that the truth ultimately reveals itself in the ring. The frustrating thing is we don't really know until we truly know.

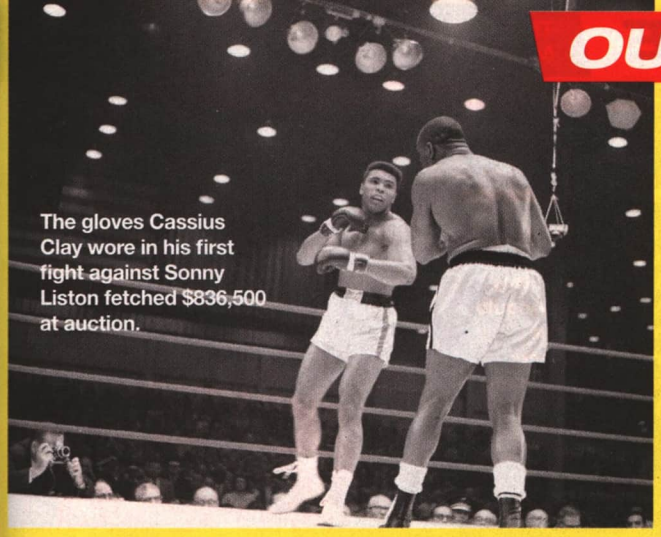
Many fighters are brought along slowly, developed gradually until their handlers feel that the time is right — that enough flaws have been polished, that a particular titleholder is vulnerable, that it's time to graduate into the real world. Once that happens, we find that some prospects never belonged, others were good but not good enough, and a rare few show signs of being great.

For every Andre Berto, Victor Ortiz and Jermain Taylor who reach their ceilings while young, there is an Andre Ward. There once was a time when Ward, who won gold in 2004, was being criticized for his gradual progress. Yet the boxer who spent nearly five years refining himself after his pro debut, and who went down hard in his seventh pro fight, suddenly installed himself as the best 168-pounder with a surprising win over Mikkel Kessler. He's been the best super middleweight for four years since

Given their contrasting amateur backgrounds, Lomachenko's confidence and Russell's cautiousness are understandable. But Russell has been a pro for five years now. The only way for him to pass his first true test is for him to finally take one on.

RUSSELL: SCOTT HEAVEY; LOMACHENKO: ETHAN MILLER/ALLSTON; THE RING MAGAZINE

By **Brian Harty**



The gloves Cassius Clay wore in his first fight against Sonny Liston fetched $836,500 at auction.

STILL SHAKING IT UP

Who knows why or how people pay so much money for old boxing gloves at auctions, especially when they're from a guy's last fight, which typically doesn't mean much. But this particular guy used those gloves to take the heavyweight world title from **Sonny Liston** on Feb. 25, 1964, after which the man known as **Cassius Clay** was retired and replaced by **Muhammad Ali**. The gloves were sold to an anonymous buyer for $836,500 three days before the bout's 50th anniversary.

Around that same anniversary, however, *The Washington Times* obtained documents showing that in 1964 the FBI had been very interested in the possibility of a fix. Their investigation centered on **Ash Resnick**, a gambler with "major mob ties" who, along with Liston, was rumored to have made $1 million betting against the defending champion. Memos sent to FBI director **J. Edgar Hoover** referenced testimony that said as much.

The Bureau never officially made the connection, and nothing suggests that Ali was involved, but it hardly matters. Nor does the arbitrary stack of cash traded for the gloves, which was less than the reported $1.1 million paid in 2012 for the pair Ali used to defeat **Floyd Patterson** two fights later. The legacy is in place, and the Liston-Clay gloves symbolize the most profound transition in the sport's history, the point at which a very good American boxer became an architect of worldwide change. Without them there would be no Muhammad Ali.

The Muhammad Ali Center marked the anniversary by starting a Twitter account, and its first tweet echoed what Ali had shouted at reporters after the Liston fight: "I shook up the world!"

A new heavyweight shakeup arrived in the form of **Zhang Zhilei**, a 6-foot-6 Olympic silver medalist from China, who was signed by promoter **Dino Duva**'s fledgling company, Dynasty Boxing.

Recent heavyweight **Antonio Tarver** was arrested in Florida in early March on a warrant related to $200,000 in unpaid casino loans from the Wynn Las Vegas. Tarver was released three days later after his six-figure bail was posted by manager **Al Haymon**, who then presumably vanished into an antique lamp. Haymon allegedly also paid off Tarver's debt.

IBF junior middleweight titleholder **Carlos Molina** found himself behind bars in Las Vegas, just days before he was to face **Jermall Charlo** on the March 8 Canelo Alvarez-Alfredo Angulo undercard. He was arrested for allegedly failing to re-register as a sex offender in Wisconsin as required by a 2001 conviction. He was released (allegedly – no kidding – with help from Haymon, who manages Charlo), but was arrested again after questions about his immigration status arose. The Charlo fight was canceled, and the IBF declared that Molina has until June to defend his title.

Former two-division titleholder **Antonio Cermeno** was murdered in Venezuela after he and members of his family were kidnapped. The others escaped while the kidnappers refueled their vehicle, but Cermeno was later found on a road in the coastal state of Miranda, shot to death.

The family of former heavyweight **Magomed Abdusalamov** initiated a lawsuit against the New York State Athletic Commission, alleging it allowed Abdusalamov to endure unnecessary trauma during his November loss to **Mike Perez** in The Theater at Madison Square Garden and then failed to provide proper medical care afterward. The suit is seeking damages of $100 million for the Russian fighter, who spent over a month in a coma and is now brain-damaged.

Four-division titleholder **Pernell Whitaker** won his own court case in Virginia, granting him the go-ahead to evict his mother. **Novella Whitaker**, 73, had been living in a home Pernell gave to her in better days, 30 years ago, when he was living in the glow of the gold medal he'd won at the 1984 Olympics. The cash-strapped Hall of Famer said he took legal action because his mom failed to pay thousands in property taxes but wouldn't move out, and he needed to sell the house to avoid foreclosure. The ousted matriarch said she'll go live with her daughter and called herself "a survivor," though it's doubtful she'll be calling her son "Sweet Pea" anymore.

Canelo Alvarez demonstrated in an impressive victory over Alfredo Angulo that he had no lingering effects from his loss to Floyd Mayweather Jr.

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH

CANELO ALVAREZ

By **Michael Rosenthal**

Canelo Alvarez seems to have gotten over his frustrating loss to Floyd Mayweather Jr. in September.

The test came in the form of Alfredo Angulo, a limited but durable opponent who was coming off a strong performance against the talented Erislandy Lara. And to say Alvarez passed

with flying colors doesn't do justice to his dominance on March 8 in Las Vegas.

The redhead from Guadalajara performed like a fighter whose confidence is intact, attacking Angulo with menacing efficiency from the opening bell. Alvarez landed one damaging right hand after another until referee Tony Weeks decided in the 10th round that Angulo had to be saved from himself.

Two judges scored each of the first nine rounds for Alvarez while one judge gave a single round to Angulo, which was generous. He was on his heels from the beginning, never really in the fight.

The CompuBox statistics were striking. Alvarez landed a remarkable 64 percent of his power punches, which explains the battered face of the defense-challenged Angulo. And the loser connected on a paltry 14 percent of his punches overall, evidence of Alvarez's underrated defensive skills.

The result was more of a gruesome beatdown than a competitive fight, which is exactly how a fighter who sees himself as a superstar should bounce back from a setback.

Indeed, Alvarez's performance allowed the memories of a disappointing night against the No. 1 fighter in the world – the Mexican's first defeat – to fade just a bit and re-established his credentials as a legitimate star.

"The promotion was 'The Return of Canelo,'" Alvarez said at the post-fight news conference. "But let me tell you: Canelo has never been gone. He's still here." RING

POUND FOR POUND: No change.

HEAVYWEIGHTS: Tomasz Adamek (No. 3 last month) fell to No. 9 after losing a unanimous decision to undefeated Ukrainian Vyacheslav Glaskov, who entered the ratings at No. 8. Ruslan Chagaev (No. 9 last month) was dropped from the ratings as Deontay Wilder held his spot at No. 10 following a first-round KO of Malik Scott (unrated).

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No change.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: Tony Bellew (No. 9 last month) moved up to cruiserweight, so he was removed. Isaac Chilemba (No. 10 last month) thus moved up a notch, and undefeated Colombian-Canadian Eleider Alvarez took the No. 10 spot.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Arthur Abraham (No. 5 last month) bolstered his Top 10 standing and returned to the titleholders club with a split decision over Robert Stieglitz (No. 3 at the time). Abraham moved up to No. 3, and Stiegltiz fell to No. 4, pushing George Groves down a notch to No. 5.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No change.

WELTERWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: No change.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: No. 8 Terence Crawford defeated No. 3 Ricky Burns to take Burns' WBO belt, the Nebraskan's first world title. Crawford took the No. 3 spot from Burns, who fell to No. 5 and pushed Kevin Mitchell (No. 6 last month) and Daniel Estrada (No. 7 last month) down one notch each. Sharif Bogere (No. 5 last month) hasn't fought for more than a year and at press time had nothing scheduled, so he was dropped. That lifted Mitchell and Estrada back to their pre-Burns-Crawford ranks and Omar Figueroa (No. 9 last month) and Juan Diaz (No. 10 last month) up one spot each. Japan-based Venezuelan Jorge Linares arrived at No. 10 on the strength of an impressive decision over Nihito Arakawa (unrated).

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: Will Tomlinson (No. 10 last month) lost a unanimous decision to unrated Jerry Belmontes. He was replaced at No. 10 by Sergio Thompson, who notched a unanimous decision over Canelo Alvarez's younger brother, Ricardo Alvarez (unrated), on the Canelo Alvarez-Alfredo Angulo undercard.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Orlando Salido (No. 2 last month) won a split decision over the much-hyped Vasyl Lomachenko (unrated) but missed weight and said he was finished at 126, so he was dropped from the ratings. Everyone from No. 3 Abner Mares to No. 10 Nonito Donaire rose a spot, and undefeated Californian Ronny Rios took the vacant No. 10 slot. Following his second-round knockout loss to Juan Manuel Lopez at junior lightweight, Daniel Ponce De Leon (No. 6 last month) was dropped from the ratings, which elevated everyone under him and created space for Welshman Lee Selby at No. 10.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: No. 10 Fernando Montiel beat former titleholder Cristobal Cruz but did so weighing in at 128 pounds. He was replaced at No. 10 by undefeated Filipino Genesis Servania.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: No change.

FLYWEIGHTS: After a series of canceled fights, Moruti Mthalane finally got back in the ring and scored a unanimous decision over unrated Jether Oliva. Mthalane had been removed from the ratings because of 18 months of inactivity but reclaimed his Top 10 status at No. 6.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No change.

STRAWWEIGHTS: No change.

Middleweight Daniel Geale (right) stopped Garth Wood in six rounds to bounce back from his loss to Darren Barker last August.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT UNLIMITED

C	**WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**	Ukraine | 61-3-0 (51 KOs)
1.	**KUBRAT PULEV**	Bulgaria | 19-0-0 (10 KOs)
2.	**ALEXANDER POVETKIN**	Russia | 26-1-0 (18 KOs)
3.	**BERMANE STIVERNE**	Canada | 23-1-1 (20 KOs)
4.	**TYSON FURY**	U.K. | 22-0-0 (16 KOs)
5.	**ROBERT HELENIUS**	Finland | 19-0-0 (11 KOs)
6.	**CHRIS ARREOLA**	U.S. | 36-3-0 (31 KOs)
7.	**ODLANIER SOLIS**	Cuba | 20-1-0 (13 KOs)
8.	**VYACHESLAV GLAZKOV**	Ukraine | 17-0-1 (11 KOs)
9.	**TOMASZ ADAMEK**	Poland | 49-3-0 (29 KOs)
10.	**DEONTAY WILDER**	U.S. | 31-0-0 (31 KOs)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 200 LBS

C	**YOAN PABLO HERNANDEZ**	Cuba | 28-1-0 (14 KOs)
1.	**MARCO HUCK**	Germany | 37-2-1 (26 KOs)
2.	**KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK**	Poland | 49-2-1 (35 KOs)
3.	**DENIS LEBEDEV**	Russia | 25-2-0 (19 KOs)
4.	**OLA AFOLABI**	U.K. | 20-3-4 (9 KOs)
5.	**GRIGORY DROZD**	Russia | 38-1-0 (27 KOs)
6.	**ILUNGA MAKABU**	Congo | 16-1-0 (15 KOs)
7.	**DMYTRO KUCHER**	Ukraine | 21-1-0 (15 KOs)
8.	**FIRAT ARSLAN**	Germany | 33-7-2 (21 KOs)
9.	**MATEUSZ MASTERNAK**	Poland | 31-1-0 (23 KOs)
10.	**THABISO MCHUNU**	South Africa | 15-1-0 (10 KOs)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 175 LBS

C	**ADONIS STEVENSON**	Canada | 23-1-0 (20 KOs)
1.	**BERNARD HOPKINS**	U.S. | 54-6-2 (32 KOs)
2.	**SERGEY KOVALEV**	Russia | 23-0-1 (21 KOs)
3.	**JEAN PASCAL**	Canada | 29-2-1 (17 KOs)
4.	**BEIBUT SHUMENOV**	Kazakhstan | 14-1-0 (9 KOs)
5.	**JUERGEN BRAEHMER**	Germany | 42-2-0 (31 KOs)
6.	**CHAD DAWSON**	U.S. | 31-3-0 (17 KOs)
7.	**TAVORIS CLOUD**	U.S. | 24-2-0 (19 KOs)
8.	**NATHAN CLEVERLY**	U.K. | 26-1-0 (12 KOs)
9.	**ISAAC CHILEMBA**	Malawi | 22-2-2 (9 KOs)
10.	**ELEIDER ALVAREZ**	Colombia | 14-0-0 (8 KOs)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 168 LBS

C	**ANDRE WARD**	U.S. | 27-0-0 (14 KOs)
1.	**CARL FROCH**	U.K. | 32-2-0 (23 KOs)
2.	**MIKKEL KESSLER**	Denmark | 46-3-0 (35 KOs)
3.	**ARTHUR ABRAHAM**	Armenia | 39-4-0 (28 KOs)
4.	**ROBERT STIEGLITZ**	Russia | 46-4-0 (26 KOs)
5.	**GEORGE GROVES**	U.K. | 19-1-0 (15 KOs)
6.	**THOMAS OOSTHUIZEN**	South Africa | 22-0-2 (13 KOs)
7.	**SAKIO BIKA**	Cameroon | 32-5-3 (21 KOs)
8.	**JAMES DEGALE**	U.K. | 18-1-0 (12 KOs)
9.	**MARCO ANTONIO PERIBAN**	Mexico | 20-1-1 (13 KOs)
10.	**MAXIM VLASOV**	Russia | 29-1-0 (14 KOs)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 160 LBS

C **SERGIO MARTINEZ**
Argentina | 51-2-2 (28 KOs)

1. **GENNADY GOLOVKIN**
Kazakhstan | 29-0-0 (26 KOs)
2. **FELIX STURM**
Germany | 39-3-2 (18 KOs)
3. **DANIEL GEALE**
Australia | 30-2-0 (16 KOs)
4. **PETER QUILLIN**
U.S. | 30-0-0 (22 KOs)
5. **MATTHEW MACKLIN**
U.K. | 30-5-0 (20 KOs)
6. **MARTIN MURRAY**
U.K. | 26-1-1 (11 KOs)
7. **MARCO ANTONIO RUBIO**
Mexico | 58-6-1 (50 KOs)
8. **CURTIS STEVENS**
U.S. | 26-4-0 (19 KOs)
9. **HASSAN N'DAM N'JIKAM**
Cameroon | 29-1-0 (18 KOs)
10. **BILLY JOE SAUNDERS**
U.K. | 19-0-0 (10 KOs)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 154 LBS

C **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**
U.S. | 45-0-0 (26 KOs)

1. **CANELO ALVAREZ**
Mexico | 43-1-1 (31 KOs)
2. **ERISLANDY LARA**
Cuba | 19-1-2 (12 KOs)
3. **MIGUEL COTTO**
Puerto Rico | 38-4-0 (31 KOs)
4. **CARLOS MOLINA**
Mexico | 22-5-2 (6 KOs)
5. **AUSTIN TROUT**
U.S. | 26-2-0 (14 KOs)
6. **DEMETRIUS ANDRADE**
U.S. | 20-0-0 (13 KOs)
7. **VANES MARTIROSYAN**
U.S. | 33-1-1 (21 KOs)
8. **WILLIE NELSON**
U.S. | 21-1-1 (12 KOs)
9. **JERMELL CHARLO**
U.S. | 23-0-0 (11 KOs)
10. **ISHE SMITH**
U.S. | 25-6-0 (11 KOs)

WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 147 LBS

C **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**
U.S. | 45-0-0 (26 KOs)

1. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
U.S. | 31-0-0 (12 KOs)
2. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 55-7-1 (40 KOs)
3. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines | 55-5-2 (38 KOs)
4. **KELL BROOK**
U.K. | 32-0-0 (22 KOs)
5. **ROBERT GUERRERO**
U.S. | 31-2-1 (18 KOs)
6. **SHAWN PORTER**
U.S. | 23-0-1 (14 KOs)
7. **KEITH THURMAN**
U.S. | 22-0-0 (20 KOs)
8. **PAULIE MALIGNAGGI**
U.S. | 33-5-0 (7 KOs)
9. **MARCOS MAIDANA**
Argentina | 35-3-0 (31 KOs)
10. **ADRIEN BRONER**
U.S. | 27-1-0 (22 KOs)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 140 LBS

C **DANNY GARCIA**
U.S. | 28-0-0 (16 KOs)

1. **LUCAS MATTHYSSE**
Argentina | 34-3-0 (32 KOs)
2. **RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV**
Russia | 23-2-0 (16 KOs)
3. **AMIR KHAN**
U.K. | 28-3-0 (19 KOs)
4. **LAMONT PETERSON**
U.S. | 32-2-1 (16 KOs)
5. **MIKE ALVARADO**
U.S. | 34-2-0 (23 KOs)
6. **ZAB JUDAH**
U.S. | 42-9-0 (29 KOs)
7. **KHABIB ALLAKHVERDIEV**
Russia | 19-0-0 (9 KOs)
8. **DIERRY JEAN**
Canada | 25-1-0 (17 KOs)
9. **VIKTOR POSTOL**
Ukraine | 25-0-0 (10 KOs)
10. **SELCUK AYDIN**
Turkey | 26-2-0 (19 KOs)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 135 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **MIGUEL VAZQUEZ**
Mexico | 34-3-0 (13 KOs)
2. **RICHAR ABRIL**
Cuba | 18-3-1 (8 KOs)
3. **TERENCE CRAWFORD**
U.S. | 23-0-0 (16 KOs)
4. **RAYMUNDO BELTRAN**
Mexico | 28-6-1 (17 KOs)
5. **RICKY BURNS**
U.K. | 36-3-1 (11 KOs)
6. **KEVIN MITCHELL**
U.K. | 37-2-0 (27 KOs)
7. **DANIEL ESTRADA**
Mexico | 32-2-1 (24 KOs)
8. **OMAR FIGUEROA**
U.S. | 22-0-1 (17 KOs)
9. **JUAN DIAZ**
U.S. | 39-4-0 (19 KOs)
10. **JORGE LINARES**
Venezuela | 36-3-0 (23 KOs)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 130 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **TAKASHI UCHIYAMA**
Japan | 20-0-1 (17 KOs)
2. **MIKEY GARCIA**
U.S. | 34-0-0 (28 KOs)
3. **RANCES BARTHELEMY**
Cuba | 19-0-0 (12 KOs)
4. **TAKASHI MIURA**
Japan | 27-2-2 (20 KOs)
5. **JUAN CARLOS BURGOS**
Mexico | 30-2-2 (20 KOs)
6. **ROMAN MARTINEZ**
Puerto Rico | 27-2-2 (16 KOs)
7. **ARGENIS MENDEZ**
Dominican Rep. | 21-2-1 (11 KOs)
8. **DIEGO MAGDALENO**
U.S. | 25-1-0 (10 KOs)
9. **TAKAHIRO AO**
Japan | 25-3-1 (12 KOs)
10. **SERGIO THOMPSON**
Mexico | 29-3-0 (26 KOs)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 126 LBS

C **VACANT**

1. **JHONNY GONZALEZ**
Mexico | 55-8-0 (47 KOs)
2. **ABNER MARES**
Mexico | 26-1-1 (14 KOs)
3. **EVGENY GRADOVICH**
Russia | 18-0-0 (9 KOs)
4. **SIMPIWE VETYEKA**
South Africa | 26-2-0 (16 KOs)
5. **NICHOLAS WALTERS**
Jamaica | 23-0-0 (19 KOs)
6. **BILLY DIB**
Australia | 36-3-0 (21 KOs)
7. **JAVIER FORTUNA**
Dominican Rep. | 23-0-1 (17 KOs)
8. **NONITO DONAIRE**
Philippines | 32-2-0 (21 KOs)
9. **RONNY RIOS**
U.S. | 22-0-0 (10 KOs)
10. **LEE SELBY**
U.K. | 18-1-0 (7 KOs)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 122 LBS

C **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX**
Cuba | 13-0-0 (8 KOs)

1. **CARL FRAMPTON**
U.K. | 17-0-0 (12 KOs)
2. **LEO SANTA CRUZ**
U.S. | 27-0-1 (15 KOs)
3. **KIKO MARTINEZ**
Spain | 30-4-0 (22 KOs)
4. **VIC DARCHINYAN**
Armenia | 39-6-1 (28 KOs)
5. **VICTOR TERRAZAS**
Mexico | 37-3-1 (21 KOs)
6. **SCOTT QUIGG**
U.K. | 27-0-2 (20 KOs)
7. **CRISTIAN MIJARES**
Mexico | 49-8-2 (24 KOs)
8. **JEFFREY MATHEBULA**
South Africa | 27-5-2 (14 KOs)
9. **JHONATAN ROMERO**
Colombia | 23-1-0 (12 KOs)
10. **GENESIS SERVANIA**
Philippines | 24-0-0 (10 KOs)

HOW OUR RATINGS ARE COMPILED

Championship vacancies can be filled in the following two ways: 1. THE RING's Nos. 1 and 2 contenders fight one another; 2. If the Nos. 1 and 2 contenders chose not to fight one another and either of them fights No. 3, No. 4 or No. 5, the winner may be awarded THE RING belt if the Editorial Board deems the contenders worthy.

A champion can lose his belt in six situations: 1. The Champion loses a fight in the weight class in which he is champion; 2. The Champion moves to another weight class; 3. The Champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months; 4. The Champion does not schedule a fight at his championship weight for 18 months (even if he fights at another weight); 5. The Champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-5 contender from any weight class for two years; 6. The Champion retires.

THE RING Ratings Chairman Chuck Giampa considers input from the Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world but has final say on all changes. That applies to both the pound-for-pound and divisional ratings.

Records provided by boxrec.com

RATINGS

BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 118 LBS

C VACANT

1. **ANSELMO MORENO**
Panama | 34-2-1 (12 KOs)
2. **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA**
Japan | 20-0-2 (15 KOs)
3. **KOKI KAMEDA**
Japan | 32-1-0 (17 KOs)
4. **MALCOLM TUNACAO**
Philippines | 33-3-3 (20 KOs)
5. **HUGO RUIZ**
Mexico | 33-2-0 (29 KOs)
6. **JOSEPH AGBEKO**
Ghana | 29-5-0 (22 KOs)
7. **JAMIE MCDONNELL**
U.K. | 23-2-1 (10 KOs)
8. **TOMOKI KAMEDA**
Japan | 29-0-0 (18 KOs)
9. **JULIO CEJA**
Mexico | 26-1-0 (24 KOs)
10. **PAULUS AMBUNDA**
Namibia | 20-1-0 (10 KOs)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 115 LBS

C VACANT

1. **OMAR NARVAEZ**
Argentina | 41-1-2 (22 KOs)
2. **CARLOS CUADRAS**
Mexico | 29-0-0 (24 KOs)
3. **SRISAKET SOR RUNGVISAI**
Thailand | 26-3-1 (24 KOs)
4. **TEPPARITH SINGWANCHA**
Thailand | 26-3-0 (16 KOs)
5. **ZOLANI TETE**
South Africa | 18-3-0 (16 KOs)
6. **JUAN CARLOS SANCHEZ JR.**
Mexico | 17-2-1 (9 KOs)
7. **ARTHUR VILLANUEVA**
Philippines | 25-0-0 (14 KOs)
8. **OLEYDONG SITHSAMERCHAI**
Thailand | 52-1-1 (18 KOs)
9. **FELIPE ORUCUTA**
Mexico | 29-2-0 (24 KOs)
10. **DAIKI KAMEDA**
Japan | 29-4-0 (18 KOs)

FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 112 LBS

C AKIRA YAEGASHI
Japan | 19-3-0 (9 KOs)

1. **ROMAN GONZALEZ**
Nicaragua | 38-0-0 (32 KOs)
2. **JUAN FRANCISCO ESTRADA**
Mexico | 25-2-0 (18 KOs)
3. **BRIAN VILORIA**
U.S. | 32-4-0 (19 KOs)
4. **EDGAR SOSA**
Mexico | 49-8-0 (29 KOs)
5. **JUAN CARLOS REVECO**
Argentina | 32-1-0 (17 KOs)
6. **MORUTI MTHALANE**
South Africa | 30-2-0 (20 KOs)
7. **TOSHIYUKI IGARASHI**
Japan | 18-2-1 (11 KOs)
8. **GIOVANI SEGURA**
Mexico | 31-3-1 (27 KOs)
9. **HERNAN MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 36-4-0 (26 KOs)
10. **MILAN MELINDO**
Philippines | 30-1-0 (12 KOs)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 108 LBS

C VACANT

1. **DONNIE NIETES**
Philippines | 32-1-4 (18 KOs)
2. **KAZUTO IOKA**
Japan | 14-0-0 (9 KOs)
3. **MOISES FUENTES**
Mexico | 19-1-1 (10 KOs)
4. **ADRIAN HERNANDEZ**
Mexico | 29-2-1 (18 KOs)
5. **JOHNRIEL CASIMERO**
Philippines | 19-2-0 (11 KOs)
6. **PEDRO GUEVARA**
Mexico | 21-1-1 (14 KOs)
7. **FELIX ALVARADO**
Nicaragua | 18-1-0 (15 KOs)
8. **ALBERTO ROSSEL**
Peru | 32-8-0 (13 KOs)
9. **NAOYA INOUE**
Japan | 5-0-0 (4 KOs)
10. **FAHLAN SAKKREERIN JR.**
Thailand | 23-2-0 (15 KOs)

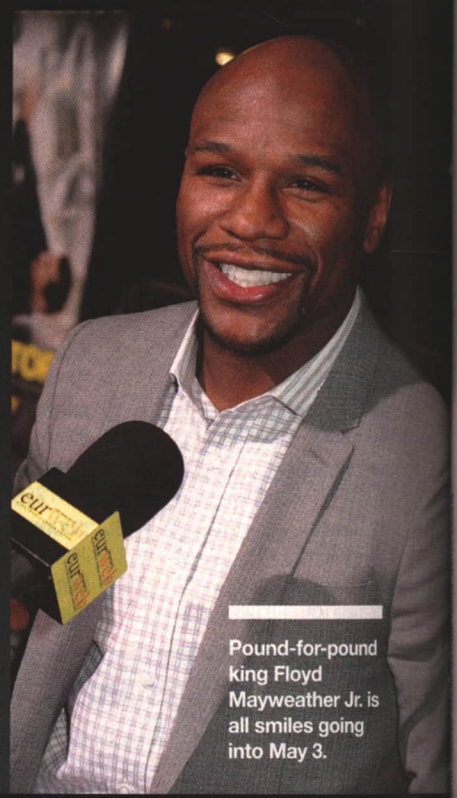
STRAWWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 105 LBS

C VACANT

1. **HEKKIE BUDLER**
South Africa | 25-1-0 (8 KOs)
2. **WANHENG MENAYOTHIN**
Thailand | 32-0-0 (10 KOs)
3. **DENVER CUELLO**
Philippines | 33-5-6 (21 KOs)
4. **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA**
Japan | 26-6-0 (10 KOs)
5. **CARLOS BUITRAGO**
Nicaragua | 27-0-1 (16 KOs)
6. **MERLITO SABILLO**
Philippines | 23-0-1 (12 KOs)
7. **JESUS SILVESTRE**
Mexico | 28-4-0 (20 KOs)
8. **OSVALDO NOVOA**
Mexico | 13-4-1 (8 KOs)
9. **RYUJI HARA**
Japan | 16-0-0 (10 KOs)
10. **XIONG ZHAO ZHONG**
China | 22-5-1 (12 KOs)

POUND FOR POUND

1. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.**
U.S. | 45-0-0 (26 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT/ JR. MIDDLEWEIGHT
2. **ANDRE WARD**
U.S. | 27-0-0 (14 KOs) | SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT
3. **TIMOTHY BRADLEY**
U.S. | 31-0-0 (12 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
4. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine | 61-3-0 (51 KOs) | HEAVYWEIGHT
5. **SERGIO MARTINEZ**
Argentina | 51-2-2 (28 KOs) | MIDDLEWEIGHT
6. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico | 55-7-1 (40 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
7. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines | 55-5-2 (38 KOs) | WELTERWEIGHT
8. **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX**
Cuba | 13-0-0 (8 KOs) | JR. FEATHERWEIGHT
9. **CANELO ALVAREZ**
Mexico | 43-1-1 (31 KOs) | JR. MIDDLEWEIGHT
10. **CARL FROCH**
U.K. | 32-2-0 (23 KOs) | SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT



Pound-for-pound king Floyd Mayweather Jr. is all smiles going into May 3.

THE RING POLICY ON RATED BOXERS WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS

THE RING will remove from its ratings any rated boxer — including a champion — if such boxer at some point undergoes drug testing (Olympic-style or otherwise) and that boxer tests positive for a performance-enhancing drug.

In the event that a boxer has undergone testing in which the boxer provides two samples ("A" and "B") and the boxer's "A" and subsequent "B" samples test positive for a performance-enhancing drug or if his "A" sample tests positive and he waives his right to have the "B" sample tested then the boxer shall immediately be removed from the ratings.

A boxer whose "A" sample tested positive and is awaiting the results of his "B" sample will not be allowed to fight for a championship or rise in the ratings.

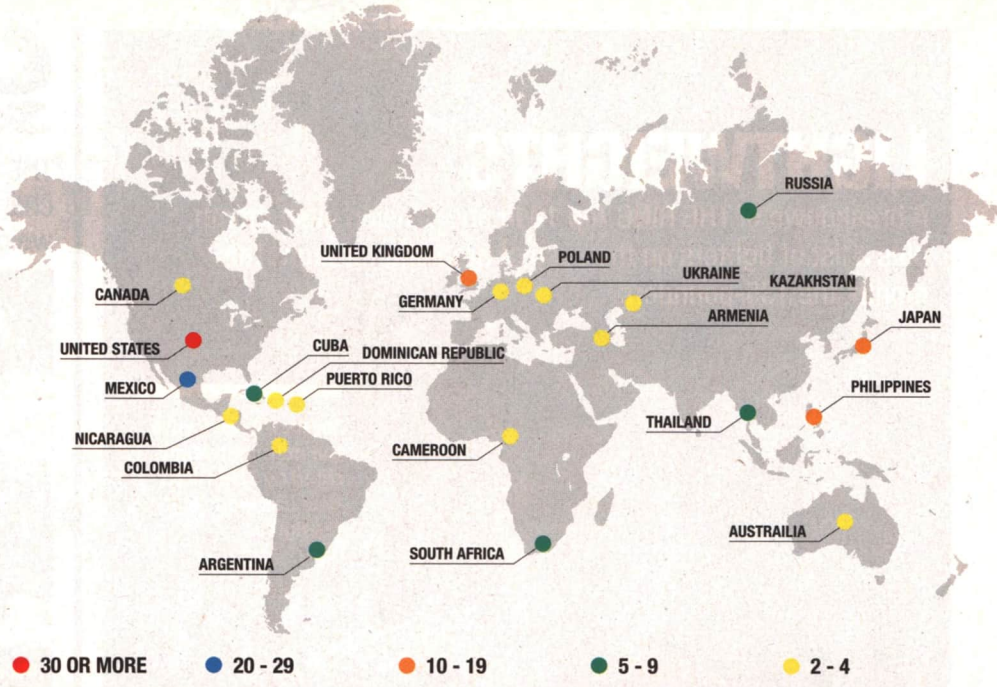
A boxer who is removed because of a positive test will have the opportunity to earn his way back into the ratings after any suspension period is completed.

A boxer who is dropped also may be reinstated if the testing agency subsequently reverses its decision or a court of competent jurisdiction finds that the test result was invalid.

RATED FIGHTERS BY COUNTRY

UNITED STATES	34 *	▲1
MEXICO	28	▼2
UNITED KINGDOM	17	
JAPAN	13	
PHILIPPINES	10	▲1
RUSSIA	9	▼1
SOUTH AFRICA	7	▲1
CUBA	6	
ARGENTINA	5	
THAILAND	5	▼1
CANADA	4	
GERMANY	4	
UKRAINE	4	▲1
NICARAGUA	3	
POLAND	3	
ARMENIA	2	
AUSTRALIA	2	▼1
CAMEROON	2	
COLOMBIA	2	▲1
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	2	
KAZAKHSTAN	2	
PUERTO RICO	2	
BULGARIA	1	
CHINA	1	
CONGO	1	
DENMARK	1	
FINLAND	1	
GHANA	1	
JAMAICA	1	
MALAWI	1	
NAMIBIA	1	
PANAMA	1	
PERU	1	
SPAIN	1	
TURKEY	1	
VENEZUELA	1	

** Includes two ratings for Floyd Mayweather Jr. (junior middleweight and welterweight).*



ENGLAND VS. REST OF U.K.

Seventeen boxers from the United Kingdom are rated by THE RING. The majority (13) hail from England, with the rest coming from other countries that make up the kingdom. Here's how it breaks down. (See bottom for list of U.K. fighters who aren't English.)

DIVISION	ENGLISH	OTHER
HEAVYWEIGHTS	1	0
CRUISERWEIGHTS	1	0
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS	0	1
SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	3	0
MIDDLEWEIGHTS	3	0
JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS	0	0
WELTERWEIGHTS	1	0
JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS	1	0
LIGHTWEIGHTS	1	1
JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS	0	0
FEATHERWEIGHTS	0	1
JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS	1	1
BANTAMWEIGHTS	1	0
JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS	0	0
FLYWEIGHTS	0	0
JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS	0	0
STRAWWEIGHTS	0	0
TOTAL	13	4

Non-English: Nathan Cleverly, light heavyweight (Wales); Ricky Burns, lightweight (Scotland); Lee Selby, featherweight (Wales); and Carl Frampton, junior featherweight (Northern Ireland).

STAYING POWER

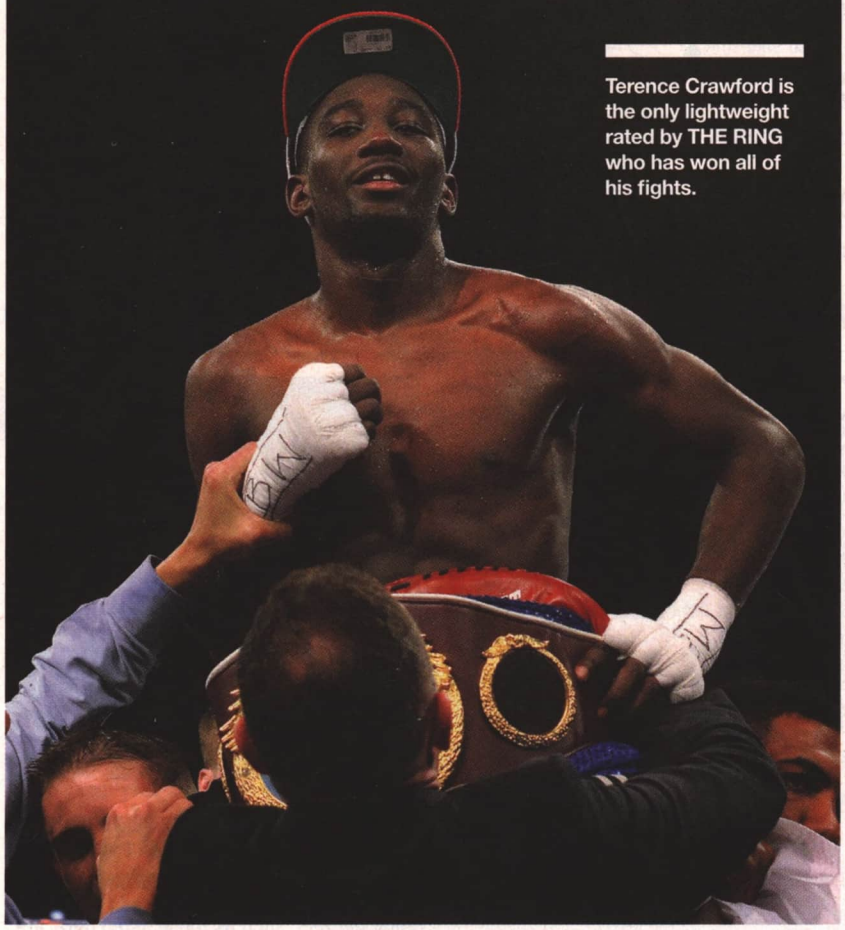
Some fighters, such as those listed here, are more durable than others. The boxers below have the most bouts among those rated by THE RING.

65 MARCO ANTONIO RUBIO, MIDDLEWEIGHT
64 WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO, HEAVYWEIGHT
63 JHONNY GONZALEZ, FEATHERWEIGHT
63 JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ, WELTERWEIGHT
62 BERNARD HOPKINS, LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT
62 MANNY PACQUIAO, WELTERWEIGHT
59 CRISTIAN MIJARES, JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT
57 EDGAR SOSA, FLYWEIGHT
55 SERGIO MARTINEZ, MIDDLEWEIGHT
54 OLEYDONG SITHSAMERCHAI, JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT
52 TOMASZ ADAMEK, HEAVYWEIGHT
52 KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK, CRUISERWEIGHT

FOCUS ON . . .

LIGHTWEIGHTS

A breakdown of THE RING Top 10 in one division each month, plus a list of fighters on the cusp of breaking through. This month: the 135-pounders.



Terence Crawford is the only lightweight rated by THE RING who has won all of his fights.

MOST WEEKS RATED: MIGUEL VAZQUEZ **185**

FEWEST WEEKS RATED: JORGE LINARES **2**

OLDEST: RAYMUNDO BELTRAN **32**

YOUNGEST: OMAR FIGUEROA **24**

MOST FIGHTS: JUAN DIAZ **43**

FEWEST FIGHTS: RICHAR ABRIL **22**

HIGHEST WINNING PERCENTAGE: TERENCE CRAWFORD **100 PERCENT**

LOWEST WINNING PERCENTAGE: BELTRAN **80 PERCENT**

MOST KOS: KEVIN MITCHELL **27**

FEWEST KOS: ABRIL **8**

LONGEST CURRENT WINNING STREAK: CRAWFORD **23 FIGHTS**

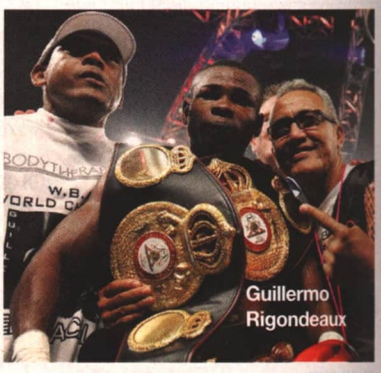
ON THE POUND-FOR-POUND LIST: NONE

TITLEHOLDERS IN THE TOP 10: ABRIL **(WBA)**, CRAWFORD **(WBO)**, FIGUEROA **(WBC)**, VAZQUEZ **(IBF)**

ON THE CUSP (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER): SHARIF BOGERE, YURIORKIS GAMBOA, GHISLAIN MADUMA, JOHN MOLINA, DENIS SHAFIKOV

OLD SCHOOL 8

THE RING staff members' current champions in the original eight weight classes.



Guillermo Rigondeaux

MICHAEL ROSENTHAL RING MAGAZINE EDITOR

HEAVYWEIGHT: WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT: ANDRE WARD
MIDDLEWEIGHT: SERGIO MARTINEZ
WELTERWEIGHT: FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.
LIGHTWEIGHT: MIKEY GARCIA
FEATHERWEIGHT: GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
BANTAMWEIGHT: ANSELMO MORENO
FLYWEIGHT: ROMAN GONZALEZ

DOUG FISCHER RINGTV.COM EDITOR

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LEM SATTERFIELD STAFF WRITER

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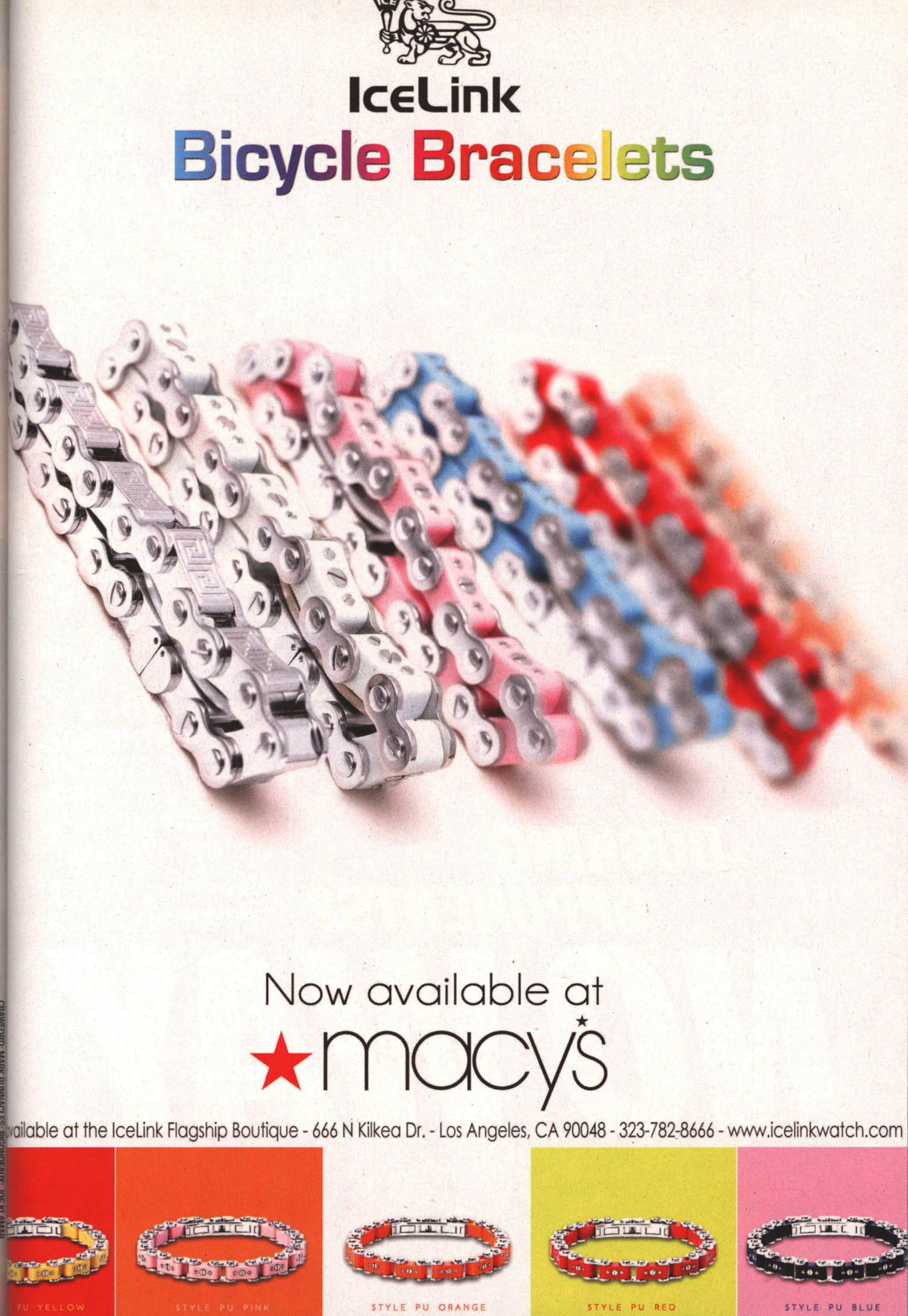
FEATHERWEIGHT: GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
BANTAMWEIGHT: ANSELMO MORENO
FLYWEIGHT: ROMAN GONZALEZ

Note: *This is how the weights break down: Heavyweight includes cruiserweight, light heavyweight includes super middleweight, all divisions middleweight through flyweight include the "junior" versions, and flyweight also includes strawweight.*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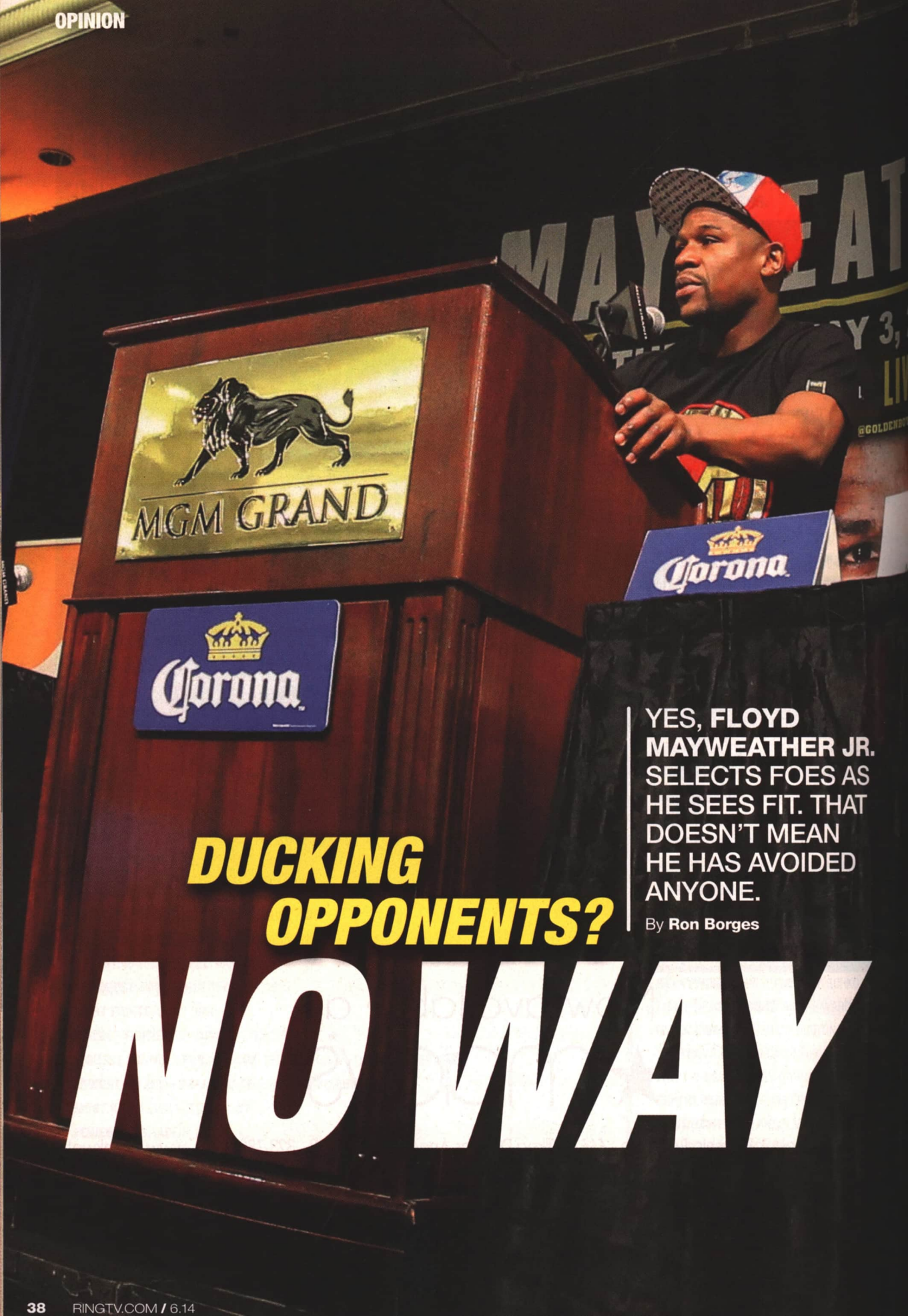
CRAWFORD: MARK RUNNACLES, BISONDEAUX: JOE KLAMAR



DUCKING OPPONENTS? NO WAY

YES, **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.** SELECTS FOES AS HE SEES FIT. THAT DOESN'T MEAN HE HAS AVOIDED ANYONE.

By **Ron Borges**

Floyd Mayweather Jr. doesn't have glaring omissions on his resume, except Manny Pacquiao.

Boxing, at its best, is the dark art of illusion. No one knows that better than Floyd Mayweather Jr., who is the fistic equivalent of David Copperfield. He is the game's master illusionist.

Mayweather exhibits that every time he steps into the ring, mesmerizing into near-immobility almost all the opponents he has faced with rapid movement of body and mind. Those skills have left him undefeated at age 37 and almost always unchallenged. Yet his critics argue the latter is in part because he is as much an illusionist outside the ring as inside it.

Because of his power in the marketplace as boxing's highest-paid prize fighter, Mayweather dictates not only terms but also opponents. Everyone in his weight classes and bigger ones, such as middleweight champion Sergio Martinez, have pursued him by willingly accepting catchweights, giving up world titles or conceding financial and fistic advantages for the opportunity to cash in on the revenue his fights produce. This gives Mayweather almost carte blanche to pick his opponents, as he proved again recently when he launched an internet poll for fans to select his May 3 opponent from a field of two, Amir Khan and Marcos Maidana.

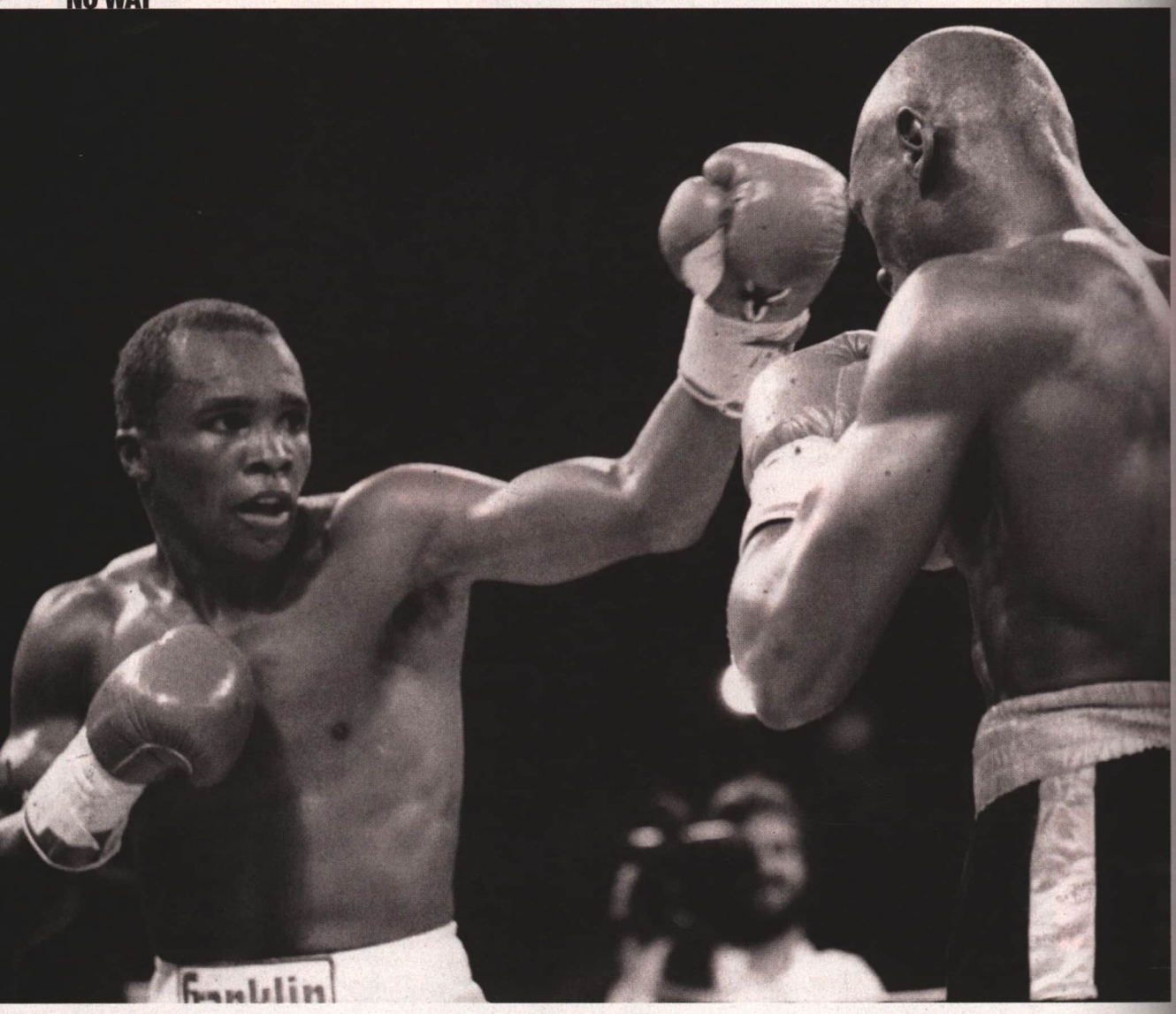
The fans chose Khan. Mayweather soon chose Maidana, proving once again that just when you think he's here, he's over there. And when you think he's over there, he's standing here and hitting you with a counterpunch. After the choice was made, Mayweather declared, "Look at [Maidana's] last four fights (four wins, three knockouts and twice dropping Mayweather protégé Adrien Broner on the way to a clear decision) and look at Khan's (2-2 including a KO loss to Danny Garcia). I had to go with the best choice."

Mayweather's critics immediately wondered: "For whom?"

If there is a primary knock on Mayweather, it is the sense his critics have that he handpicks his opponents, which frankly he does. Then again, what great fighter who rose to his station didn't?

Sugar Ray Leonard certainly was the master of that, taking on his most dangerous opponents at the best possible time for him and refusing to grant the most competitive ones rematches until they were well past their primes or in some cases (Marvin Hagler immediately comes to mind) not at all. Yet who would argue Leonard didn't face the best of his time?

Wilfred Benitez? Check. Tommy Hearns? Check. Roberto Duran? Check. Hagler?



Ron Borges writes that Sugar Ray Leonard fought his most dangerous opponents, including Marvin Hagler, when it was beneficial to him.

Eventually check but a little late on that one. Did he manipulate all of them in one way or another through the power he carried in the marketplace? Absolutely. So what? He fought them, didn't he?

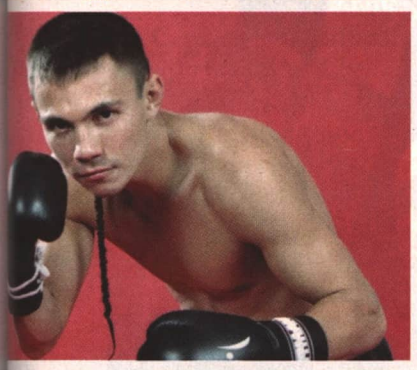
At 37 and universally acclaimed the best pound-for-pound fighter in the world, Mayweather has fought his way into the same financial and negotiating position Leonard once held, dictating terms and selecting the opponents he feels best fit his needs. He willingly conceded as much after settling on Maidana when he said, "I've earned my stripes and fight who I want to fight. Nobody is forced to watch."

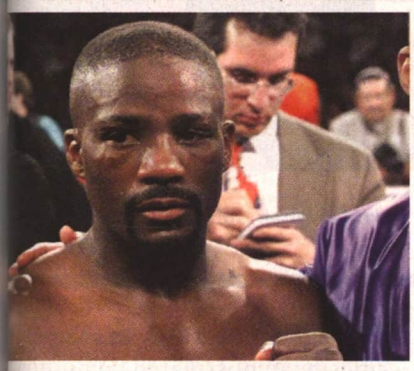
Yet they do, whether it's against Canelo Alvarez, who though non-competitive was the B-side of the highest grossing pay-per-view show in history, or Maidana, who most experts believe is whatever the word for more than a prohibitive underdog would be ("sacrificial lamb" comes to mind).

Acknowledging that Mayweather fights who he wants, who did he miss in his career? My respected colleague at THE RING, Doug Fischer, insists Mayweather avoided the likes of Kostya Tszyu, Joel Casamayor, Acelino Freitas, Steve Johnston and Antonio Margarito.

Let's take a closer look at that and Mayweather's overall resume.

On the issue of not fighting Tszyu, timing was as much a factor as anything. Mayweather twice won WBC title eliminators at 140 pounds, over DeMarcus Corley on May 22, 2004, and Henry Bruseles on Jan. 22, 2005. Prior to that, Mayweather had won the WBC lightweight title from Jose Luis Castillo on April 20, 2002, a controversial





Mayweather never faced these fighters, who might've posed a threat in their primes: (top to bottom) Joel Casamayor, Kostya Tszyu, Acelino Freitas, Stevie Johnston and Antonio Margarito.

decision that led Mayweather to give him an immediate rematch eight months later. He defended that 135-pound title three times before moving up to 140 in the first of those title eliminators. Less than a year after Mayweather moved up, Tszyu retired.

In the interim, Tszyu came off a 22-month layoff and made his last successful title defense on Nov. 6, 2004, beating Sharmba Mitchell with only the IBF title at stake. You really think he wanted Mayweather after nearly two years off? Seven months later Tszyu was pummeled by Ricky Hatton before retiring on his stool after the 11th round, having grown visibly old in the middle of that fight. He never fought again.

Perhaps one can argue Mayweather could have moved up sooner, but Tszyu retired just 11 months and 17 days after Mayweather won the first WBC title eliminator at 140. So just how much avoidance was there, especially when you consider that Tszyu first won the 140-pound title in 1995, when Mayweather was still an amateur?

A month after Hatton beat Tszyu, Mayweather destroyed Arturo Gatti to win the WBC version of the super lightweight title. If Tszyu got old midway through the Hatton fight to the point where he never boxed again, what would have happened if he'd had to chase Mayweather for 12 rounds? Avoided Tszyu? Not likely.

One can make a reasonable case for Mayweather fighting Casamayor during Casamayor's first reign as junior lightweight champion between 1999 and 2001, except that neither of them drew flies at that stage of their careers and would have been a stylistic nightmare to watch. Certainly a fight with Freitas after he took the title from Casamayor in 2002 would have been desirable. But by the time Casamayor was splitting fights with Corrales in 2003-04, Mayweather had already moved up in weight and was gone. Same was true with Freitas when he won the WBO lightweight title on Jan. 3, 2004. By then, Mayweather was fighting at 140, a weight Freitas never approached.

While fighting Casamayor would have been bad business and terrible television, that was not the case with Freitas. But the window there was limited, and when it made the most sense – after Freitas beat Casamayor in a unification fight at 130 pounds in 2002 – Mayweather was on his way to winning the lightweight title from Castillo. By the time Freitas began campaigning at 135 in 2004, Mayweather had moved on to 140, where he soon had a major payday against Gatti.

As for Margarito, to claim Mayweather avoided him is stretching it. When Margarito first won the WBO welterweight title on March 16, 2002, Mayweather was a lightweight, while Margarito was considered one of the biggest 147-pounders in recent memory. By the time Paul Williams beat Margarito on July 14, 2007, Mayweather had been welterweight champion for barely a year and was already headed to the largest pay-per-view fight in boxing history, his victory over Oscar De La Hoya on May 5, 2007, for the junior middleweight title.

Should he have ignored De La Hoya and a pile of cash for Margarito? Would anyone advising Mayweather have suggested he should square off with Margarito for comparative

chump change rather than create the all-time PPV viewing record of 2.55 million with Oscar? Need we debate this?

Mayweather fought once more, beating up Ricky Hatton, and then "retired" for nearly two years. By the time he returned, Margarito had disgraced himself, being suspended for a year for fighting with loaded gloves. When he returned without them, he was destroyed by both Manny Pacquiao and Miguel Cotto, the latter of whom Mayweather beat barely six months later.

Avoided Margarito? I think not.

A boxing career is more than a collection of every observer's "dream" fights at any given time and weight. There is timing, experience, drawing power, dueling TV networks, rival promoters and boxing politics that all come into play. While one can make a case Mayweather should have fought at least Freitas, no one with any sense would have paid for a Casamayor match (I'm falling asleep thinking about it). The Johnston argument is a reach. And Margarito was not avoided; he lost at the wrong times and later got caught cheating at the worst of times. Other than that it's all Mayweather's fault.

As for Manny Pacquiao, there is ample blame to go around for why these two haven't faced each other, but the fact is they fought for bitter rival promoters and had exclusive deals on rival cable networks much of the time. Add to that Pacquiao's early refusal of random blood testing for performance enhancing drugs (a stipulation he later agreed to)

No one can say Mayweather fought Diego Corrales when Corrales wasn't at his best.

and Mayweather's later refusal to face anyone promoted by Bob Arum, and you have the kind of ego-fueled logjam that resulted in Lennox Lewis and Riddick Bowe never squaring off and Evander Holyfield and Mike Tyson not getting around to each other until both were past their primes.

Does more blame belong to Mayweather than Pacquiao? I think not. The fact is when either thought they had the upper hand, they and their representatives acted in ways that made it impossible to come to an agreement. Mayweather's critics have postulated repeatedly that this was because he had grown so obsessed with the "0" in his record – now at 45-0 – he was unwilling to take a chance.

If he was that kind of fighter, why give Castillo an immediate rematch after their first fight was so close? If that was the case, why take a chance against an admittedly dissipated but still dangerous Shane Mosley or step in with the naturally larger De La Hoya or face Zab Judah, who was a hard-punching version of

what Mayweather is?

"Floyd Mayweather is not scared of any opponent," he insisted after choosing Maidana over Khan. Certainly it's difficult to fathom any reason he'd be fearful of Khan, whose chin has proven less than resilient and who would struggle to find a way to land a combination on Mayweather.

Another knock on Mayweather has been his well-chronicled familial and legal problems, which recently flared anew. Those factors combined to land him briefly in a county lockup in 2012 but, when compared to many of boxing's troubled legends, they pale in comparison.

Does he brag to excess and throw money around as if he has no idea of its value? He does. But much of that is a carefully crafted persona designed to sell himself to an often disinterested and unfocused public. When Arum was promoting him as "Pretty Boy Floyd," he couldn't give tickets away. Since he became "Money Mayweather," head honcho of the Money Team, he has become a national phenomenon with a six-fight Showtime contract guaranteeing him over $200 million if he completes it. That persona may be a turnoff to his critics, but it has meant big box office for Mayweather and the sport. Master Illusionist wins again.

As for those who think his resume is full of holes, did he not beat Genaro Hernandez (38-1-1) in his 18th professional fight to win his first world title when many felt he was being overmatched? Did he not give Castillo (45-5-1) an immediate rematch when there was nothing but his own ego compelling him to do so? Did he not destroy then-undefeated Diego Corrales (33-0), knocking him down five times before his corner threw in the towel? Did he not outfox and outlast De La Hoya (38-4), out-think and outpunch Judah (34-3) and Hatton (43-0), outbox Miguel Cotto (37-2), absorb Shane Mosley's (46-5) best shots and out-and-out dominate Alvarez (42-0-1)?

When it's all said and done, if the knock on Mayweather is that he missed out on Tszyu, Margarito or Johnston, there are ample explanations for why that had more to do with timing and business than any character flaw. And frankly, do you really believe they would have beaten him at the time they most likely would have fought?

Then again, if it's that he talks too much or boxes so well that nearly every fight ends up a one-sided episode of Dancing With The Star, then it says more about his critics then it does about him. In the end, the fact of the matter is Floyd Mayweather Jr. is the best boxer of his time, and there's a large gap between himself and second place. That's how he will be remembered decades from now, when memories of Stevie Johnston or Antonio Margarito or Joel Casamayor or Acelino Freitas have long dulled and faded. Surely they'll ask why he never fought Pacquiao if he doesn't, but they'll ask Pacquiao the same question if they're honest about it, and neither will have a satisfactory explanation.

As for his latest choice of opponents, do you really believe he chose Marcos Maidana because he isn't convinced he can beat Amir Khan? If you sincerely do, there's only one question left to ask: Do you need your head examined? RING

MAYWEATHER'S TOP 10

The 10 most important victories in Floyd Mayweather Jr.'s career (in chronological order):

Genaro Hernandez, TKO 8 (1998): Schooled one of the best boxers of the era to win his first title.

Diego Corrales, TKO 10 (2001): The feared and then-unbeaten slugger went down five times.

Jose Luis Castillo I, UD 12 (2002): Some believe Mayweather received a gift decision in a close fight.

Jose Luis Castillo II, UD 12 (2002): Mayweather won the rematch somewhat more convincingly.

Arturo Gatti, TKO 6 (2005): The mismatch was Mayweather's debut as a PPV headliner.

Zab Judah, UD 12 (2006): Dominated an opponent with similar – but inferior – tools.

Oscar De La Hoya, SD 12 (2007): Outboxed the bigger and still-capable Golden Boy.

Ricky Hatton, TKO 10 (2007): Had no trouble with the then-unbeaten and highly hyped Briton.

Shane Mosley, UD 12 (2010): Mosley had just KO'd Antonio Margarito but couldn't hang with "Money."

Canelo Alvarez, UD 12 (2013): Proved that the youngster isn't in his class and made a windfall.

SHORT SIGHTED?

A FEW BENEFIT FROM THE PAY-PER-VIEW ECONOMIC MODEL BUT IT MIGHT NOT SUPPORT THE OVERALL HEALTH OF BOXING

By **Tim Smith**

The top of the boxing pay-per-view food chain has historically only had room for two big fish, two boxers who can routinely command 1 million or more buys when they climb into the ring. They're the shiny A-side to whatever B-side the promoter wants to feed to them.

Evander Holyfield and Mike Tyson shared the spotlight and the big bucks in the 1990s. Then it was Tyson and Oscar De La Hoya. More recently it has been Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao who are members of the Million Buy Boys Club.

That is likely the way that

Oscar De La Hoya vs. Floyd Mayweather Jr. was a pay-per-view bonanza, but was it good for the sport?

it will go as long as pay per view remains the best vehicle for superstar boxers to garner the most revenue possible from their fights. And that doesn't bode well for boxing fans with shallow pockets who want to see the stars in action.

Pay per view has always been a painful luxury tax for loyal boxing fans. They already pay for premium cable services like HBO and Showtime, which are the primary outlets for quality championship boxing. And if they want to see the top-tier matches involving the superstars of the sport, they have to plunk down $50 or more for pay per view.

What adds insult to the pain of boxing fans' injury is paying extra for shows involving boxers who aren't yet at that superstar level. That has always been a sore spot and will become worse as promoters and boxers determine that they aren't interested in taking the long route to pay-per-view stardom.

The proliferation of pay per view in boxing has pushed the sport more and more into the niche realm. Promoters, boxers and managers are happy when a pay-per-view show does 500,000 buys because it could generate between $25 million and $35 million. That money is split among the cable providers (they get 50 percent), the premium networks, the promoters and boxers. The actual audience for the show isn't very high. But everyone would gladly sacrifice visibility for money.

That may help the bottom line of the cable providers, promoters, managers and boxers. But in the long run it is ruining the sport for the fans who can't afford the pay-per-view fee.

Mark Taffet, HBO's senior vice president of Sports Operations and PPV, is considered the guru of boxing pay per view. For two decades he has been crunching the numbers and figuring out the probability of success or failure of boxing shows on pay per view. There is one infallible rule: The consumer is never wrong.

"The pay-per-view buys and revenue are remarkably consistent over the years," Taffet said. "It is between $200 [million] and $250 million a year, plus or minus $25 million. That tells you that if you make the mistake of putting too many events on pay per view, the public will choose which ones are worth their money. It serves as equilibrium. There's a nice check and balance in the system. The consumers vote with their pocketbooks."

Consumers will be heading to the polling center quite a bit this year. There could be as many as nine pay-per-view shows in a 10-month span if Mayweather and Pacquiao each fight two times as planned in 2014. Canelo Alvarez fought Alfredo Angulo on Showtime Pay Per View on March 8. Miguel Cotto is scheduled to fight Sergio Martinez on HBO Pay Per View on June 7.

It will be the most pay-per-view boxing events in a year since HBO scheduled 10 shows (nine were aired) in 2008. Taffet said the number of matches shown on pay per view is cyclical. The cycles are determined by the boxing budgets of the premium networks and the attractiveness of the matchups.

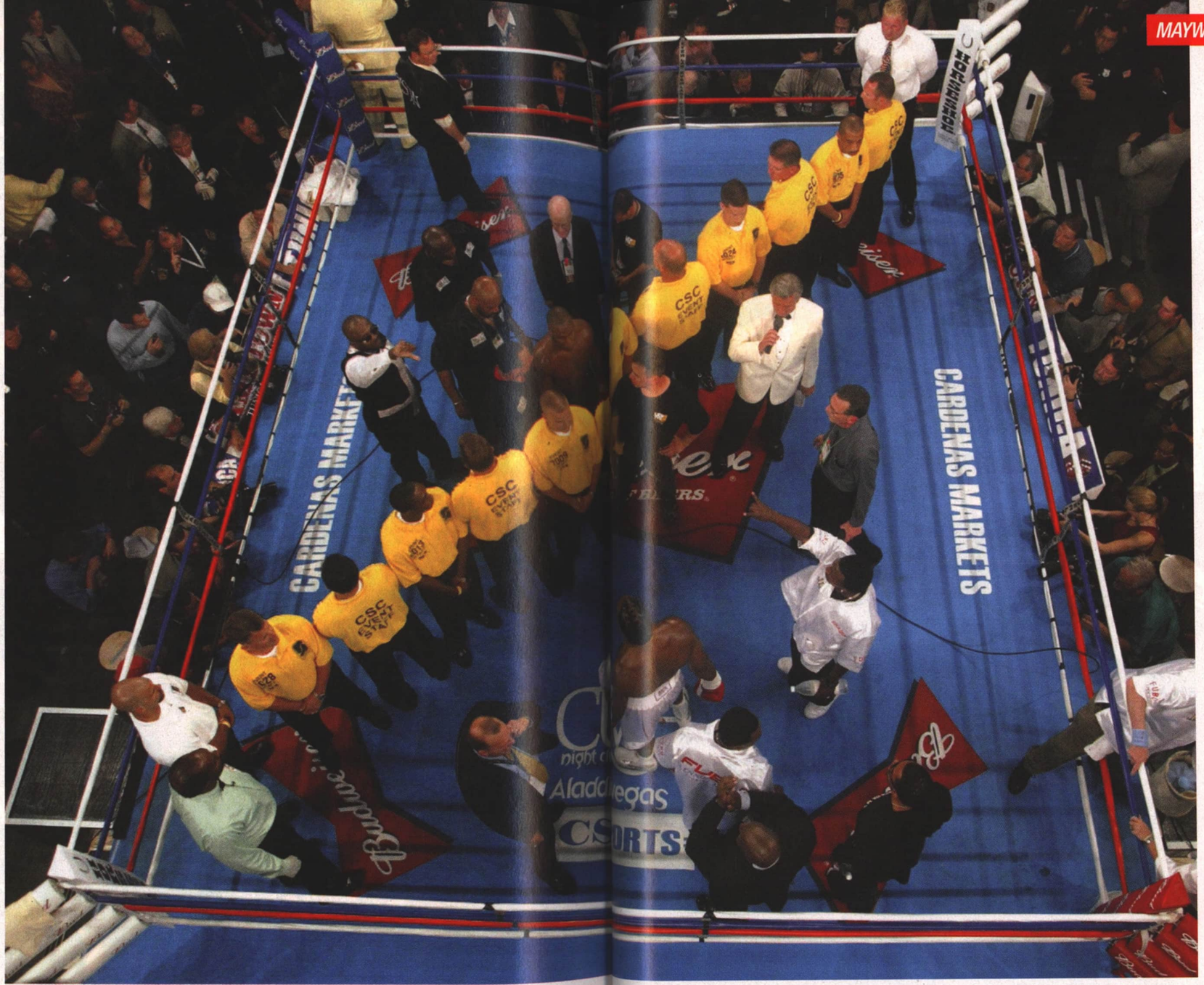
The Mayweather-Alvarez fight last September garnered 2.2 million pay-per-view buys in the highest revenue grossing boxing event in history. Even though he was the B-side in the promotion, Alvarez has informed the promoters at Golden Boy Promotions that he now *only* wants to fight on pay per view. They have agreed with his wishes.

Whether Alvarez can stick as a pay-per-view staple will be determined by how his numbers shake out. He could bounce back and forth between pay per view and premium cable depending upon the matchup. He won't be the first boxer to do that. Roy Jones Jr. and Lennox Lewis, who were among the most popular fighters of their era, swung between pay per view and HBO.

Building a boxer into a pay-per-view staple used to take longer than it has with Alvarez. Taffet points out that De La Hoya, Mayweather and Pacquiao fought at least 30 times on premium cable, which allowed them to build a strong fanbase before venturing to pay per view.

"That allowed them to maximize their revenue and their superstardom over a long period of time," Taffet said. "If you fight too much on pay per view and you're not generating revenue, your fanbase dwindles. Once they entered pay per view it took a few years until they hit megafight figures. There is no quick easy path to pay-per-view success."

What does it all mean? It means that as long as promoters and boxers believe there is more money to be made on pay per view than on premium cable, they will run there. It doesn't matter whether the sport and the fans are best served or not. RING



The fight between Mike Tyson and Lennox Lewis helped demonstrate the potential of pay-per-view boxing.

THAT'S HOW HE ROLLS

FIVE BOXING EXPERTS GIVE YOU THEIR THOUGHTS ON **FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR.'S** SIGNATURE DEFENSIVE MOVE

By **Bernard Fernandez**

They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but there is nothing quite like true originals. Larry Donald and the late Greg Page were pretty good heavyweights, but their

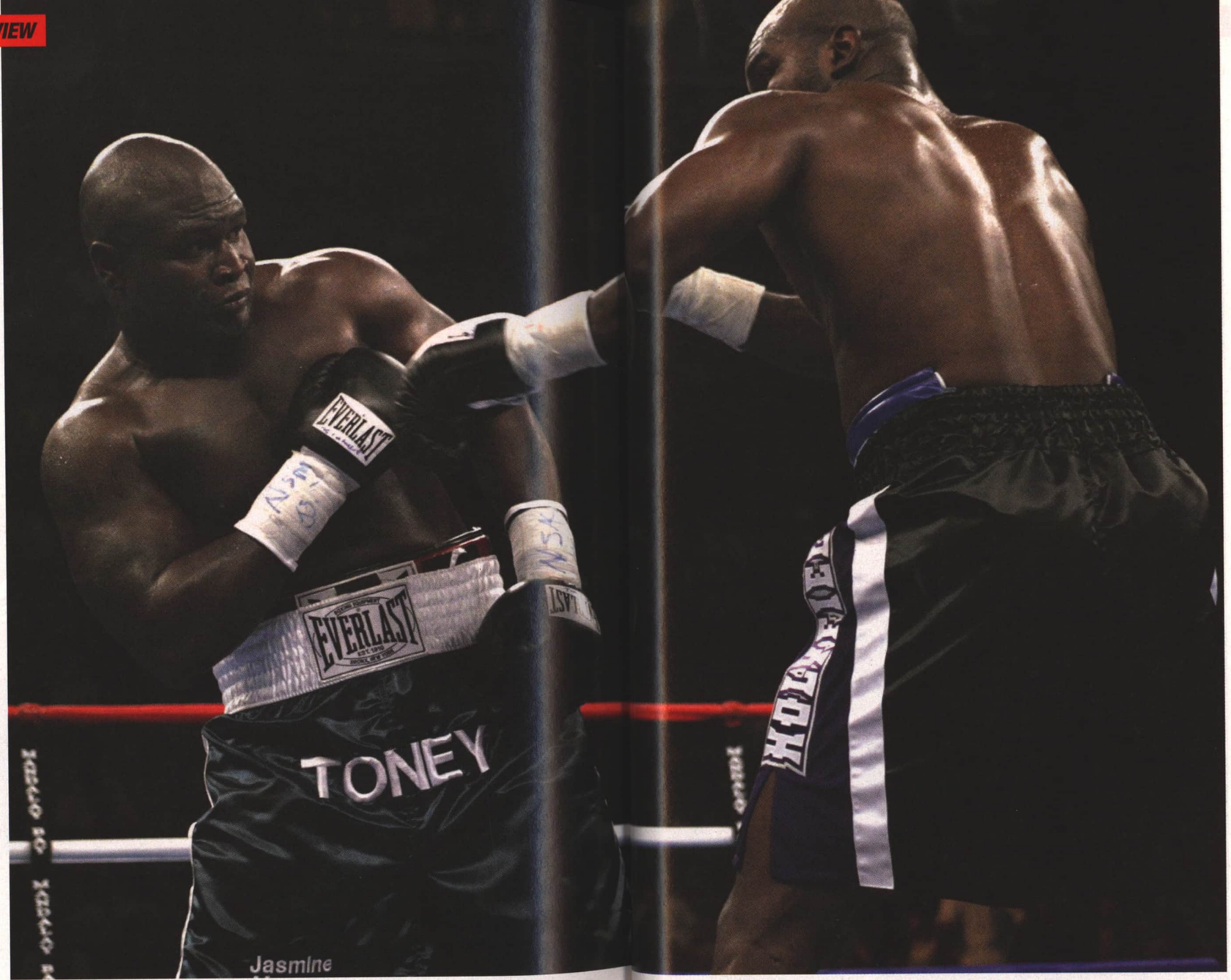
Floyd Mayweather Jr. is adept at making you miss … and then making you pay.

paint-by-numbers attempts to duplicate the distinctive style of their idol, Muhammad Ali, often came across as strained and kind of sad.

Like "The Greatest," whose repertoire included such distinguishing features as the Ali Shuffle and the Rope-a-Dope, Floyd Mayweather Jr. is widely known for what might be described as a signature move. Mayweather's shoulder roll had been employed by any number of predecessors, including his own father, before today's finest pound-for-pound fighter came along and raised the bar. It has been tried out by any number of more recent fighters hoping to tear a page from Floyd Jr.'s playbook and use it as a crib sheet for their own in-ring exams. But the overriding opinion of boxing experts is that it's always talent that makes a great fighter's pet move work, not the move that makes a fighter great.

As Mayweather (45-0, 26 KOs) nears the May 3 defense of his RING and WBC welterweight titles against Marcos Madaina (35-3, 31 KOs) at Las Vegas' MGM Grand, five sharp-eyed observers of "Money's" career gave their thoughts on his exquisite use of the shoulder roll. The panelists include:

Andre Ward, THE RING and WBA super middleweight champion; Sugar Ray Leonard, former five-division world champion and the first boxer to amass $100 million in ring earnings; Teddy Atlas, noted trainer and television analyst; Bernard Hopkins, IBF light heavyweight champion and, at 49, the oldest holder of a widely recognized world title; and Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, former WBA light heavyweight champion and currently a highly regarded trainer.



James Toney (left, fighting Evander Holyfield) used a very effective shoulder roll before Mayweather came along.

So, guys, what makes Mayweather's shoulder roll so effective, and what can Maidana – who twice knocked down a would-be Mayweather clone, Adrien Broner, en route to winning a unanimous decision on Dec. 14 – expect when he faces the master of the move instead of a mere imitator?

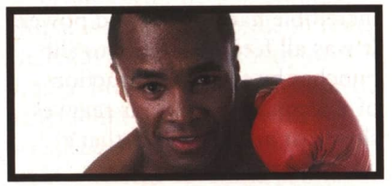
ANDRE WARD

★ "The shoulder roll is a technique that I associate with the Midwestern area, the Michigan area. James Toney [who is originally from Ann Arbor, Mich., a two-hour drive from Floyd Jr.'s native Grand Rapids] had a really good shoulder roll, though he rolled in a different way. He didn't necessarily stand up taller than Floyd, but he quite literally rolled away from punches. Sometimes Toney would give you a slight roll when you threw a right hand because he wanted to counter with his own right. Sometimes he rolled a little more, which was even more of a defensive move.

"You can use that move in different ways. If you look back at Floyd Mayweather Sr.'s fights, he used it a lot. You can see him use it pretty frequently in his fight with Sugar Ray Leonard, which I think is still available on YouTube. Obviously, he wasn't as good at it as Floyd Jr. is now, but you see where his son got it from. Roger Mayweather [Floyd Jr.'s uncle and his former trainer] used it a bit, too, but his style was slightly different. Roger was more offense-minded.

"The point I'm trying to make is that Floyd got that move almost from birth. That's the difference between him and guys who try to emulate him. Yeah, some fighters do well with it in spots. You can borrow bits and pieces from other fighters. That can be a good thing. But if you try to copy someone's complete style, I've never seen that work. Floyd Jr. began mastering the shoulder roll from the get-go. It's who he is; by now it comes naturally to him.

"There's actually a lot more to it than meets the eye. You have to have the nerve to stand in the pocket against another fighter trying to knock your head off. You have to have the timing to react at exactly the right moment. If you mis-time your reaction by a millisecond, that's the difference between rolling to get away from a punch and getting nailed hard. It took years and years of Floyd Jr. perfecting his craft in the gym that got him to where he is now."



SUGAR RAY LEONARD

★ "Floyd's shoulder roll is about perfect timing, perfect rhythm, perfect feel. It's all those ingredients that allow him to be as impenetrable as he's appeared to be for so many years. The only possible flaw I

could possibly see in his makeup is if he one day enters the ring, and he's not as focused. I haven't seen that yet, and he's what, 37? That kind of focus really impresses me because there's so much going on within his circle – some good stuff, some not-so-good. Me, at that age, I had too much crap on my mind. But when Floyd's in the ring, it's all there – body, mind, everything.

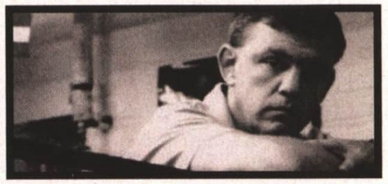
"I remember when I fought Floyd Sr., who also had a pretty good shoulder roll. It wasn't easy to penetrate. The son has taken some of that from his father and improved upon it. I don't know, maybe it's his exceptional peripheral vision, but when he tucks his chin and rolls, it's like a turtle going into his shell.

"I've reviewed tapes of Floyd Sr. and Floyd Jr. and without question, there's an incredible similarity. If there's a difference, it's that Floyd Jr. is so effective countering off it, and hurting his opponent. When he fought that Canelo [Alvarez] kid, Canelo had to be thinking, 'Where did he go? He was right there a second ago.' Floyd made him miss, and he made him pay.

"Some very gifted fighters are able to get away with certain things that other guys can't. Roy Jones was like that for a long time because he had such incredible hand speed and power. It was all feel, his ability to slip punches by the tiniest fraction of a second. Once your reflexes slow just a bit, though, that's when you get in trouble.

"Mayweather is more fundamentally sound than Jones. He's a real technician. I can't believe some people don't appreciate what this incredible fighter is doing. I love the way he breaks his man down. He lures him in and sets him up. Really, I can talk about Mayweather forever."

Mayweather was a frustrating opponent even for a future Hall of Famer such as Oscar De La Hoya.



TEDDY ATLAS

★ "Mayweather knows when to use [the shoulder roll] and when not to. He doesn't depend only on that. It's just an element within his body of work. I think it's the other parts that also go into the sum of who and what he is. It's the other parts that allow him to be effective. He has quick hands, he can fight in the center of the ring. He doesn't have to wait to lure you in so that he can counter. If you wait on him, his hand speed allows him to get off first. He showed that against Canelo. He doesn't have to just wait on guys to walk in and then set traps for them.

"Because he doesn't depend only on a particular style or a particular move, opponents can't dissect him and say, 'OK, this is what I'm going to attack.' You have to find other vulnerabilities, and he doesn't have many. The whole of Floyd Mayweather is greater than the individual parts. When you fight him, you can't concentrate on one piece of the puzzle.

"Broner, who tries to emulate Floyd, is a good example of that. He hadn't fought anybody on the level of Maidana, somebody he couldn't intimidate with his speed and some of the other physical abilities that he has. Maidana wasn't halfway defeated heading into the fight, and you saw what happened. Broner was overly dependent on that move. He thought he could depend on it to a greater extent than he should have.

"Floyd doesn't pigeonhole himself in that way. He has other things to go to, and that's what

makes him so effective. When he goes to the shoulder roll, it almost seems as if it's something new and unique. You watch him execute it like he does, and it's seems like you're seeing it for the first time.

"Where Broner went wrong was having a psychological attachment to a great fighter's most notable move. But true originals find a constancy in something. Imitators are only hoping to find that. They don't have complete assurance it will bring them to that next level. Mayweather's already at that level."

BERNARD HOPKINS

★ "You block punches off of your reflexes. It's Floyd's reflexes that make him who he is rather than the shoulder roll. Yes, he does roll his shoulder as a defensive move and to put him in a position to counterpunch, but the move won't work like it does for him if the reflexes aren't there.

"I seen Broner, who's young and has good reflexes, try to use the Floyd shoulder roll and Maidana just nailed him. What does that prove? That if you think you can get the shoulder roll down first and build off that, you're a fool. Superior reflexes, not just good or above-average reflexes, make the move work. Floyd has those superior reflexes. He's able to anticipate a punch before you even think about throwing it.

UNTOUCHABLE

Floyd Mayweather Jr. is known as one of the best defensive fighters ever. CompuBox statistics bear that out. Boxers overall land 30 percent of the total punches they throw, according to Bob Canobbio of CompuBox. In his last 10 bouts, Mayweather's opponents landed an average of 18.1 percent of their punches. Mayweather had a 42.3 percent connect rate. Here are the connect rates of Mayweather and his last 10 foes (in percentages):

	MAY.	OPP.
Canelo Alvarez	46	22
Robert Guerrero	41	19
Miguel Cotto	26	21
Victor Ortiz	35	18
Shane Mosley	44	20
Juan Manuel Marquez	59	12
Ricky Hatton	39	17
Oscar De La Hoya	43	21
Carlos Baldomir	43	12
Zab Judah	47	19

And when you do throw it, it's late. He rolls, lets the punch deflect off the side of his body and he counters.

"I know the shoulder roll is a big part of Floyd's arsenal, but every fighter is not comfortable with it or capable of executing it properly. Trying it and doing it right are not the same thing. Like I said, Broner kept trying it, and he got his ass kicked. It seems like a simple move, but it requires really precise timing. It requires anticipation. You hear people say, 'It's the roll, it's the roll,' like that's all there is to Floyd. No! The roll ain't it. It's the reflexes, it's the anticipation. The roll comes after the other guy commits to a punch. If he doesn't commit, why would Floyd roll?"

Robert Guerrero joined a long list of opponents who found Mayweather all but unhittable.

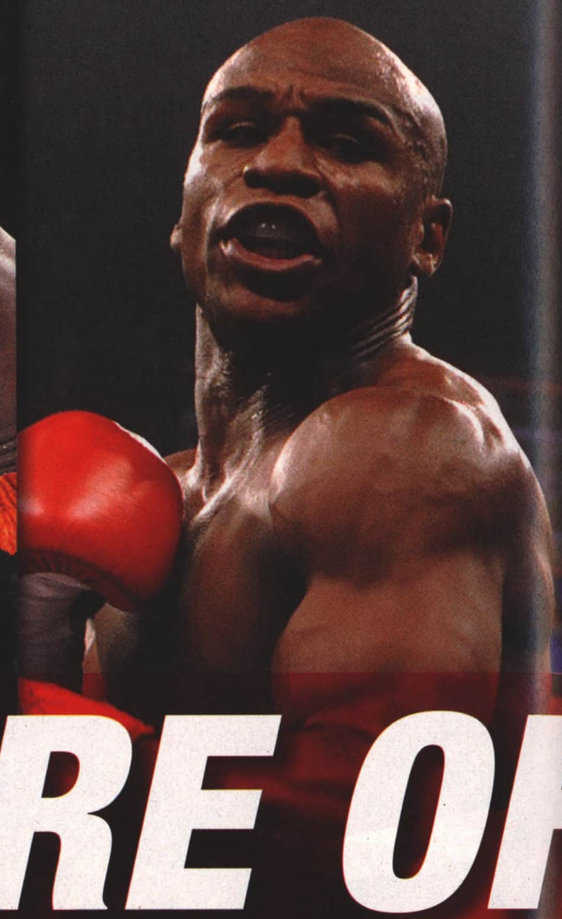
EDDIE MUSTAFA MUHAMMAD

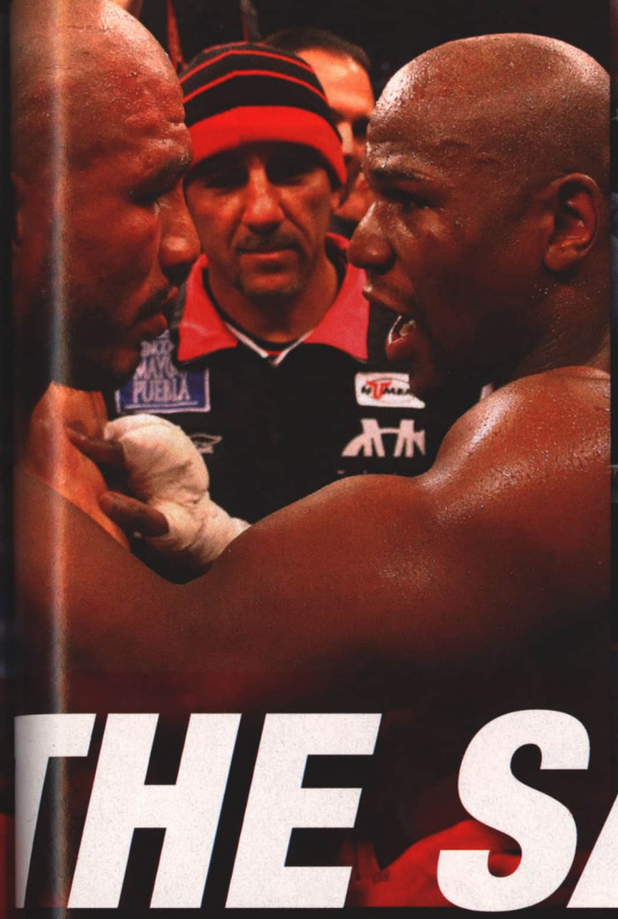
★ "The shoulder roll is basically a defensive move. If you throw a right hand at Floyd, he tucks his chin behind his left shoulder, turns to his right and is in good position to counter. A lot of fighters do that. But Floyd does it to perfection because he's been doing it for so long, and he does it so exceptionally well. Really, it's not the move that makes Floyd such a great fighter. It's his talent level.

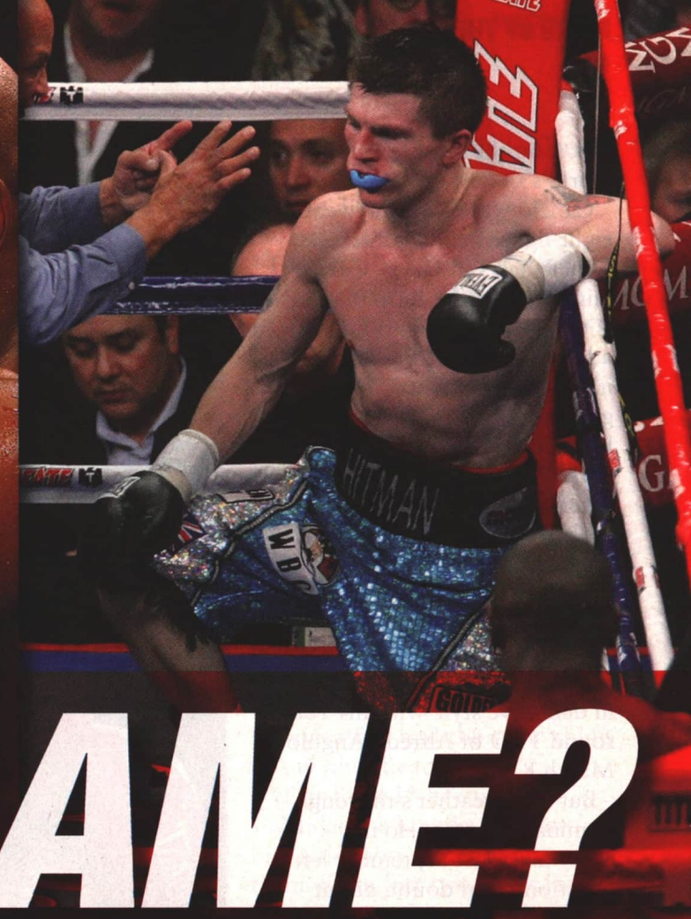
"The shoulder roll is a hard move for the other guy to counteract or neutralize if it's done right. Floyd does it about as well as anyone I've seen. He's trying to get you off-balance, and he usually succeeds. If you don't do it just so, it can turn out pretty bad.

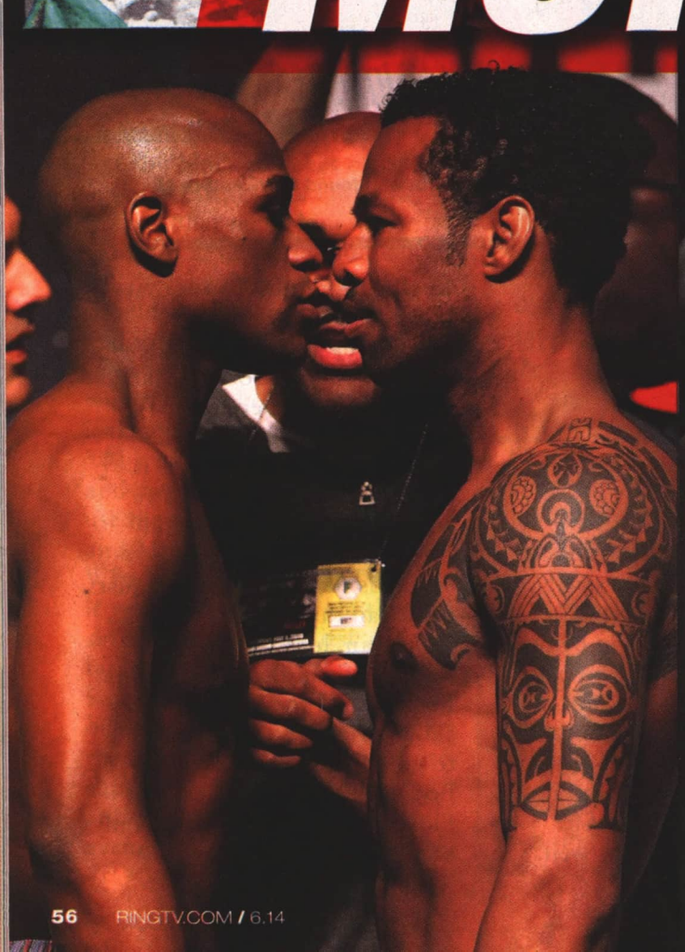
"I mean, look at Adrien Broner's fight against Maidana. Broner tried to imitate Floyd's shoulder roll, and he liked to get himself killed. Why? Because Adrien Broner is not Floyd Mayweather. There's only one Floyd Mayweather." RING

MORE OF THE SAME?









MARCOS MAIDANA WILL LIKELY SUFFER THE SAME FATE AS OTHER FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR. OPPONENTS: BIG PAYDAY, ONE-SIDED DEFEAT

By **Norm Frauenheim**

Fighting Floyd Mayweather Jr. is a way to get paid. It's also a way to look bad. At least, it has been since Mayweather became a self-contained boxing industry. He hires and fires. Picks and chooses. There's not much he doesn't do in terms of whom he fights and when he fights. He'll tell you that the power is a hard-earned prerogative, one that comes with a 45-0 record. Perhaps, it is.

As a business model, nobody is going to argue with record revenues generated by Mayweather's last venture, a dominating decision over Canelo Alvarez. On a list much more valuable than THE RING's pound-for-pound ranking, Mayweather remained a leading contender for

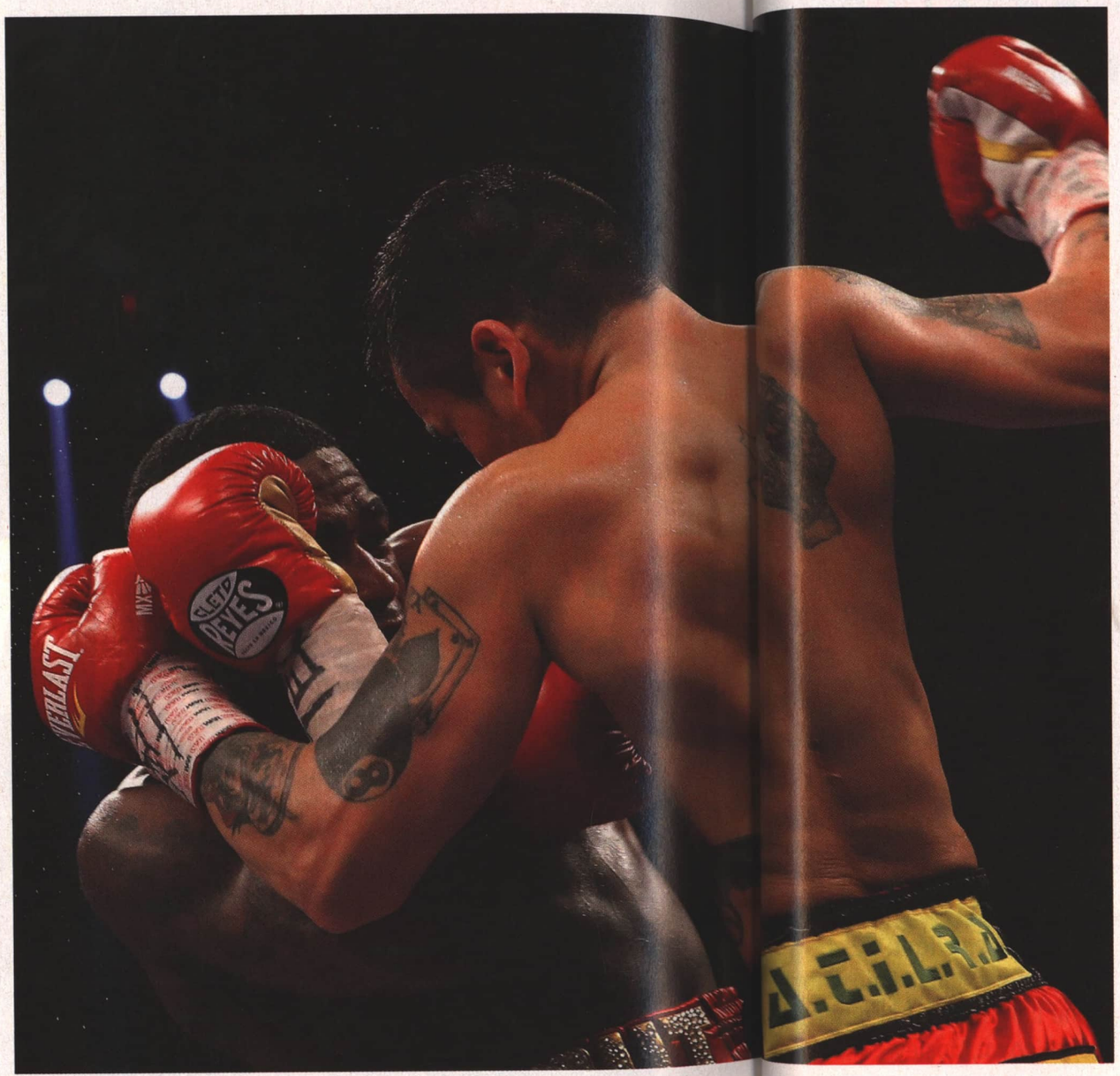
No. 1 on the *Forbes* list of the world's richest athletes.

Canelo wasn't in Mayweather's eight-figure income bracket. Other than Bill Gates, Carlos Slim and Warren Buffett, who is? But Canelo's seven figures add up to a comfortable living in any denomination. He was guaranteed $5 million and could have added a few million more with a percentage of Mexican revenue. Still, he paid a price. He looked pedestrian, ordinary in a way that failed to fulfill any of the hype that had been attached to him. The young Canelo has enough time and power to get beyond the loss. That quest began in definitive style with his 10th-round TKO of Alfredo Angulo on March 8.

But Mayweather's thorough dominance of Canelo in every facet last September left questions, real doubt, about whether anyone can emerge from a Mayweather fight with anything looking good other than their bank account.

Robert Guerrero looked bad in a loss to Mayweather in May 2013. Miguel Cotto retained respect in bruising Mayweather, yet still was beaten in a one-sided decision (118-110, 117-111, 117-111) in 2012. Victor Ortiz left looking like a chump in losing a controversial fourth-round stoppage in 2011. Shane Mosley rocked Mayweather early, yet lost by 10 points on two scorecards and eight on the third in 2010. Juan Manuel Marquez was knocked down and no closer than nine points on any of the cards in losing a unanimous decision in 2009. Ricky Hatton looked overrated in losing a 10th-round TKO in 2007.

Mayweather's seven opponents in the seven years since a record pay-per-view audience watched him score a split decision over Oscar De La Hoya might as well be the Washington Generals. They never had a chance either. They were there to be the straight man for the Harlem Globetrotters. It was their job to lose. It's how they got paid, too.



Maidana (right) stunned Adrien Broner and the boxing world, but Broner is no Mayweather.

All of this brings us to Marcos Maidana, next on Mayweather's Showtime dance card May 3 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. Is there any reason to think he can fare any better than Cotto, or Mosley, or Canelo? No, no and no. At least, that's what some offshore bookmakers were saying within hours after the welterweight fight was announced on Feb. 24. Then, Mayweather was a 10-to-1 favorite, meaning Maidana's hopes were no more than the proverbial puncher's chance.

Fair? It depends on who is doing the talking. At his first formal news conference for the bout, even Mayweather gave Maidana a shot. Then, however, that's what Mayweather had to say. Don't forget, he's a promoter, too.

"This guy is tailor-made to make a war," said Mayweather, his promotional mouthpiece firmly in place.

However, Mayweather also said: "I fight who I want to fight. Nobody is forced to watch."

Nevertheless, there's some thinking that Maidana might have a chance, in part because he's a more effective fighter since Robert Garcia became his trainer, after his career reached a critical crossroads in losing a one-sided decision to Devon Alexander in February 2012. Garcia refined his jab, which Maidana has begun to use with a sneaky, surprising effectiveness. It is the opening salvo, behind which Maidana launches the high volume of punches that arrive from angles that are as awkward as they are bewildering.

It's a subtle adjustment to a fighter who five years ago had been as crude as he was powerful. But it's enough of a change to perhaps force us to re-evaluate his chances of being at least competitive against Mayweather.

"He's a live underdog," said Paulie Malignaggi, Showtime's insightful ringside analyst and a welterweight who would also like a shot at Mayweather if he can get past Shawn Porter on April 19.

By all accounts, Maidana landed the paycheck that comes with a Mayweather fight with his unanimous decision over Adrien Broner on Dec. 14 in THE RING's 2013 Upset of the Year.

There's some skepticism about whether Maidana earned the opportunity or was Mayweather's preference all along. Early signs indicated that Amir Khan would be Mayweather's choice for May 3. Khan even told U.K. reporters that he had signed a contract. Then, however, Mayweather conducted a social-media poll: Khan or Maidana? Maidana was the early leader; Khan the eventual winner. In other polls, Maidana was the runaway winner.

The validity of any of the polls is a matter of conjecture. So, too, is whether Mayweather factored any of them into his final decision. In the end, he went against his own poll and chose Maidana, leading to questions about whether Khan might have been a tougher match for him in terms of style. The first two opponents in Mayweather's Showtime deal for a possible six fights and a potential $250 million had one thing in common. Before the Guerrero and Canelo fights, Mayweather had the same thing to say about each.

"Flat-footed," he said.

Maidana is known for a lot, but agile footwork is not one of them. Khan lost two of his last four bouts, and he struggled in his last victory over Julio Diaz in March of last year. But his feet still move with speed and agility, which could have posed a stylistic problem for Mayweather.

In Maidana's aggressive pursuit, he often crosses his feet in an awkward fashion that leaves him looking unbalanced. Yet, that vulnerability was never a factor in his overwhelming blitz of Broner, who went into the ring with "About Billions" spelled out in gold on his robe and trunks. When he left, his initials, AB, could have stood for About Bupkus. Broner was never able to do anything against Maidana.

There might be a reason for that. Behind the refined jab, Maidana's punches moved like a propeller. They simply blew Broner away at an astonishing rate. Through 12 rounds, Maidana threw nearly 1,000 punches. According to CompuBox statistics, the exact

count was 964. Broner threw less than half that number, 400. Maidana did more than outwork Broner. He confused him from the get-go. During the first two rounds, Maidana threw 171 punches to Broner's 29.

The punch rate Maidana employed and tried to sustain might provide a hint at what he'll attempt to do against Mayweather. Maidana didn't attend a formal news conference on March 8 at the MGM Grand to announce the fight. He stayed in Argentina to be with his pregnant wife. But Garcia and Alex Ariza, his conditioning coach, were there. Ariza pointed to a screen where video of Maidana's victory over Broner was shown.

"If he threw 1,000 punches in that one, we're going to have to throw 1,200, 1,300 in this one," said Ariza, who stirred up controversy in San Antonio when he was photographed applying napkins to Maidana's nose before the final round.

The blogosphere was full of suspicions that Ariza had applied some sort of stimulant, perhaps smelling salts. No, Ariza said. The napkins were gauze. Maidana wanted to blow his nose, Ariza said.

Before Maidana's upset of the heavily-favored Broner, he and Garcia hinted at the high-volume tactic.

"When I fight Broner. I am going to hit him everywhere and be busier," Maidana said. "I'm prepared to throw many punches, pressure him and cut off the ring."

Maidana did some preliminary training at an Argentina gym named for perhaps history's greatest defensive fighter. He worked at the Willie Pep Gimnasio in Santa Fe near his hometown, Margarita. Santa Fe was also the Argentine

DOMINATION

Floyd Mayweather Jr. has beaten almost all of his opponents convincingly, few more so than the six he has faced since his nearly two-year hiatus from boxing in 2007-09. In those fights, he won four unanimous decisions, one unfathomable majority decision and one fight by knockout. Here's a look at the fights:

CANELO ALVAREZ
Date: Sept. 14, 2013
Result: Majority decision
Official scoring: 116-112, 117-111 and 114-114
Rounds won/lost: 23-13
Summary: Judge C.J. Ross (114-114) hasn't worked since. My score was a 120-108 shutout.

ROBERT GUERRERO
Date: May 4, 2013
Result: Unanimous decision
Official scoring: 117-111, 117-111, 117-111
Rounds won/lost: 27-9
Summary: The judges were generous to give Guerrero three rounds. He was never in the fight.

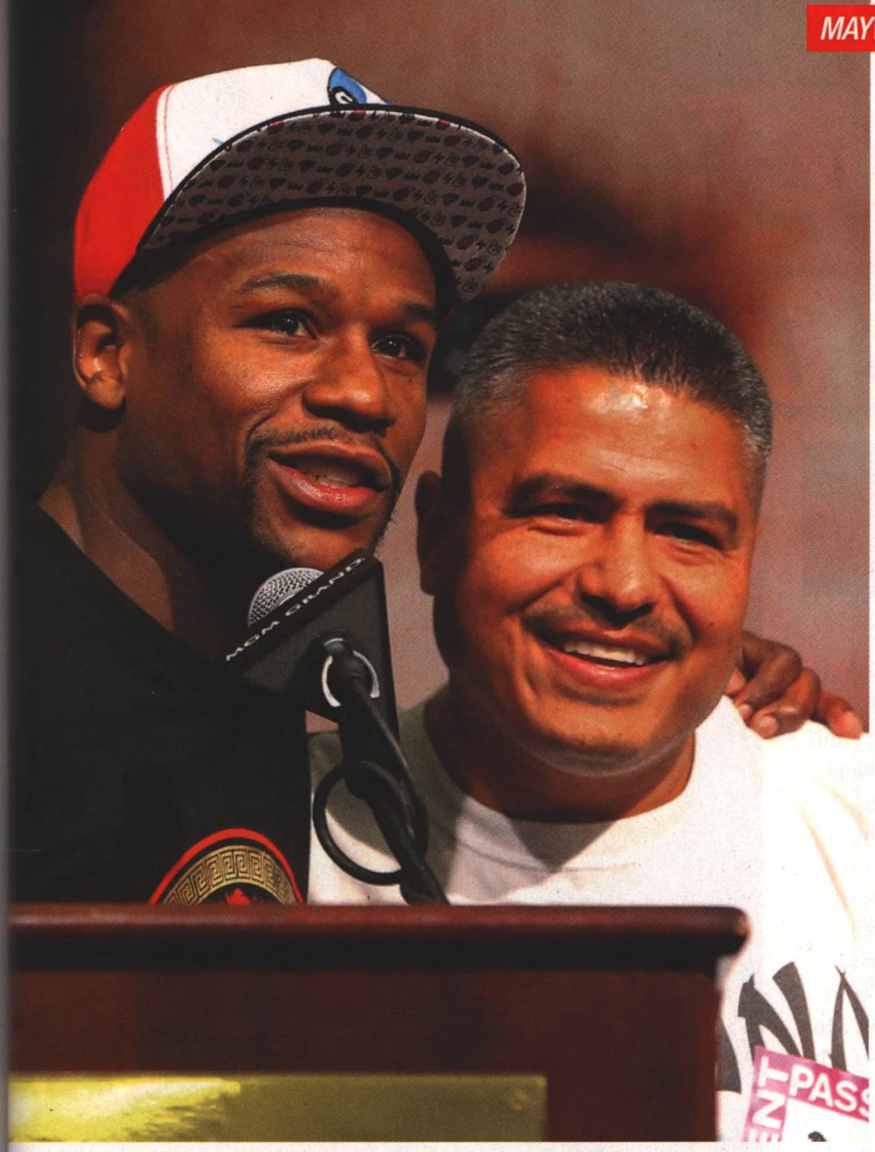
MIGUEL COTTO
Date: May 5, 2012
Result: Unanimous decision
Official scoring: 118-110, 117-111, 117-111
Rounds won/lost: 28-8
Summary: Cotto managed to tag Mayweather more than usual but still lost by a wide margin.

VICTOR ORTIZ
Date: Sept. 17, 2011
Result: KO 4
Official scoring: 30–27, 30–27, 29–28
Rounds won/lost: 8-1
Summary: Ortiz was knocked out while he wasn't looking in more of a debacle than a fight.

SHANE MOSLEY
Date: May 1, 2010
Result: UD 12
Official scoring: 119-109, 119-109, 118-110
Rounds won/lost: 32-4
Summary: Mayweather took one hard punch but otherwise shut down Mosley.

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ
Date: Sept. 19, 2009
Result: UD 12
Official scoring: 120-107, 119-108, 118-109
Rounds won/lost: 33-3
Summary: Marquez, who went down in the second, was too slow to compete.

— Michael Rosenthal



Trainer Robert Garcia (right) guided Maidana to one major upset. He'll be hard-pressed to do it again.

town where Hall of Fame middleweight Carlos Monzon grew up. There's a statue of Monzon on the waterfront of a river that runs through town.

It's safe to say that Maidana will show more of Monzon's aggressiveness and little of Pep's defensive genius in a fight that is bound to further Santa Fe's rich boxing tradition. In Mayweather, Maidana is facing the Willie Pep of today.

The unanswered question is whether Maidana is prepared for Mayweather's precision, especially with his counterpunching attack.

Mayweather has also talked about being better. He wasn't satisfied with his victory over Canelo. He graded his performance as a B or C.

"I really haven't put together my A-game yet," said Mayweather, who says he's not chasing Rocky Marciano's 49-0 record or Sugar Ray Robinson's pound-for-pound legacy or Muhammad Ali's place in history.

"I'm fighting only in the Floyd Mayweather era," he said of an era that now includes Maidana.

Maybe it's Mayweather's era because he possesses an instinct few fighters ever have.

"It's like a sixth sense," Mayweather said. "I can feel what the other fighter is about to do."

It's a sense, perhaps, defined by Mayweather's accuracy. His punches land at a rate as accurate as just about any ever have. Against Canelo, Mayweather threw 505 punches, landing 40 percent. If he has the kind of accuracy on May 3, Maidana is bound to slow down. The Argentine could find himself on the canvas if a Mayweather counter shot lands with his feet in a tangled mess and his upper body swinging back and forth in a precarious balance.

"I do have a lot of things that we did against Broner that should also be effective against Mayweather," Garcia said before Maidana left Argentina to begin training at Garcia's Boxing Academy in Oxnard, Calif. "They're not in the same league. I agree with that. Mayweather's just totally something else.

"But, going into the Broner fight, there was all this stuff about how Broner could be the next Mayweather and kind of wants to fight the same way that Mayweather fights. You know, I'm not saying that we're going to go in against another Broner. Definitely not. But there are some similarities, and that's what we're going to work very hard on. We are going to work extra hard.

"You know, styles make fights. I said it before the Broner fight: I mean, nobody thought we had a chance. Nobody. Everybody thought we were going to lose. Very few people gave Marcos a shot. But I always said: 'You know what? We don't have to be better than him. We just have to come out with a good game plan and have the style to beat him."

A style to compete with him.

MAYWEATHER SHOULD CRUISE

THE RING'S HEAD-TO-HEAD ANALYSIS

By **Doug Fischer**

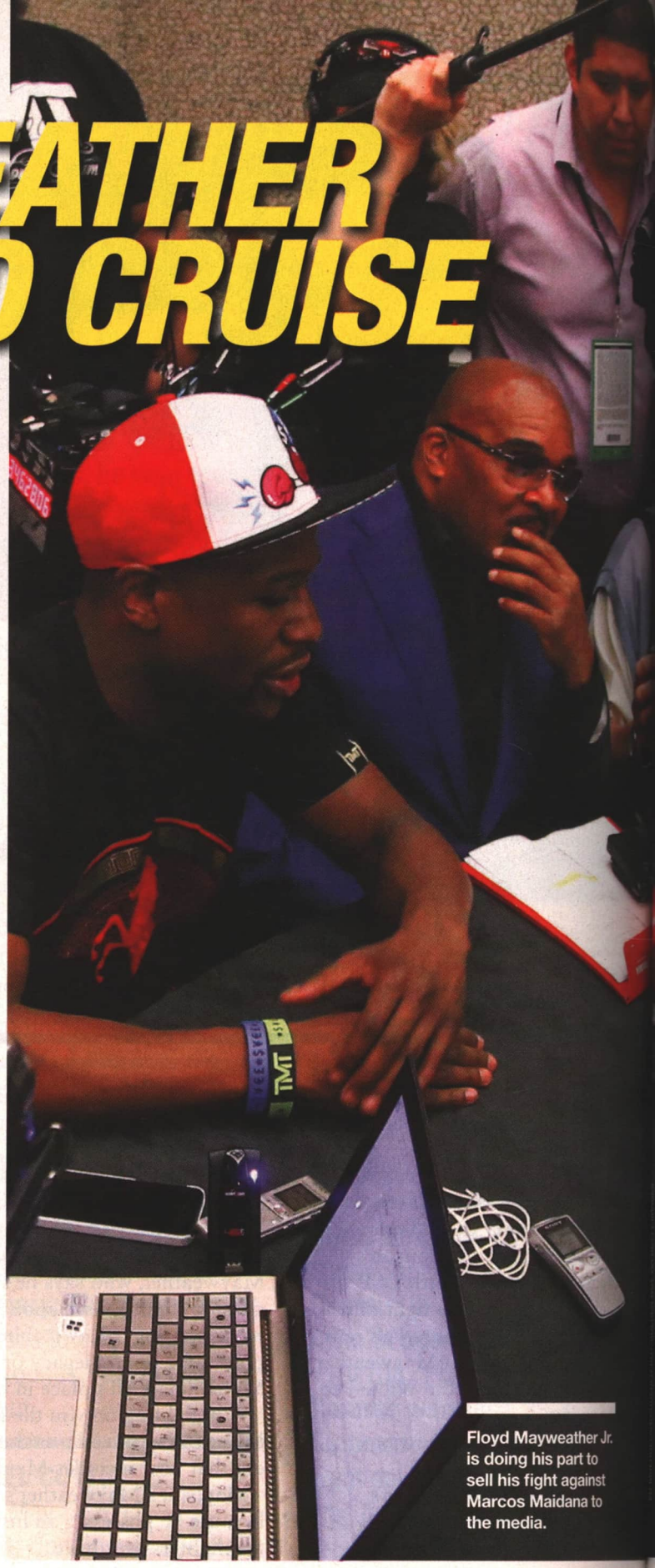
Once Floyd Mayweather Jr. narrowed the search for his May 3 opponent to two fighters – former junior welterweight titleholder Amir Khan and newly crowned WBA welterweight beltholder Marcos Maidana – the pound-for-pound king asked fans to vote for the challenger he should pick.

Maidana, who was still riding a wave of goodwill from his upset defeat of Adrien Broner last December, won most of the online polls that were set up in response to Mayweather's Twitter request, and most fans believed that the relentless Argentine was the more worthy choice.

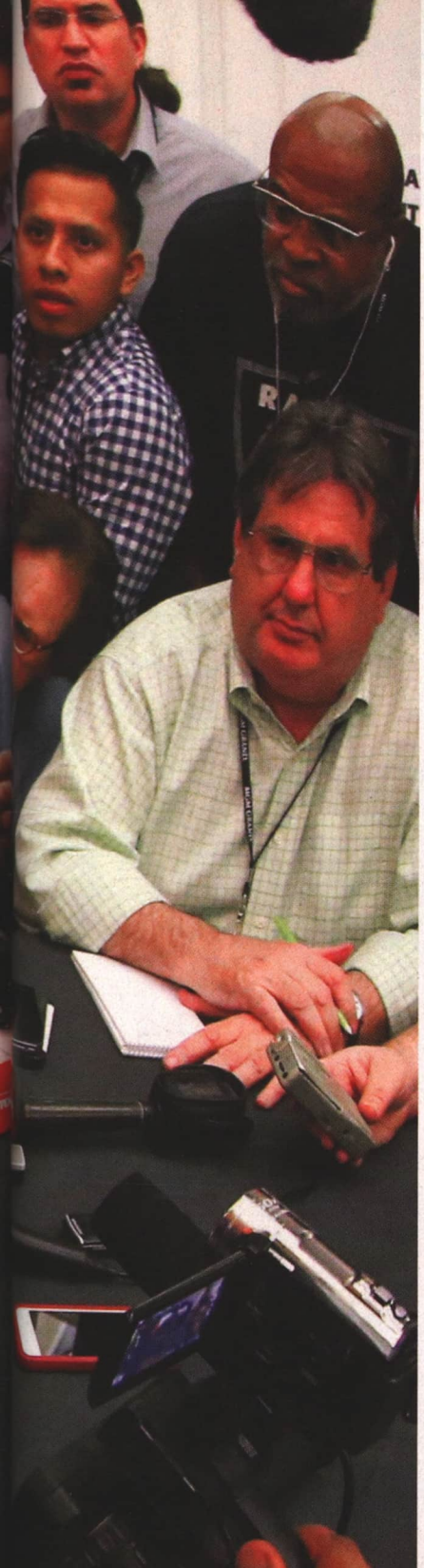
Maidana earned his shot at boxing's No. 1 star by winning his last four bouts, including stoppages of fellow sluggers Jesus Soto Karass and Josesito Lopez, and the points victory over Broner, a talented three-division titleholder considered by some to be Mayweather's heir apparent.

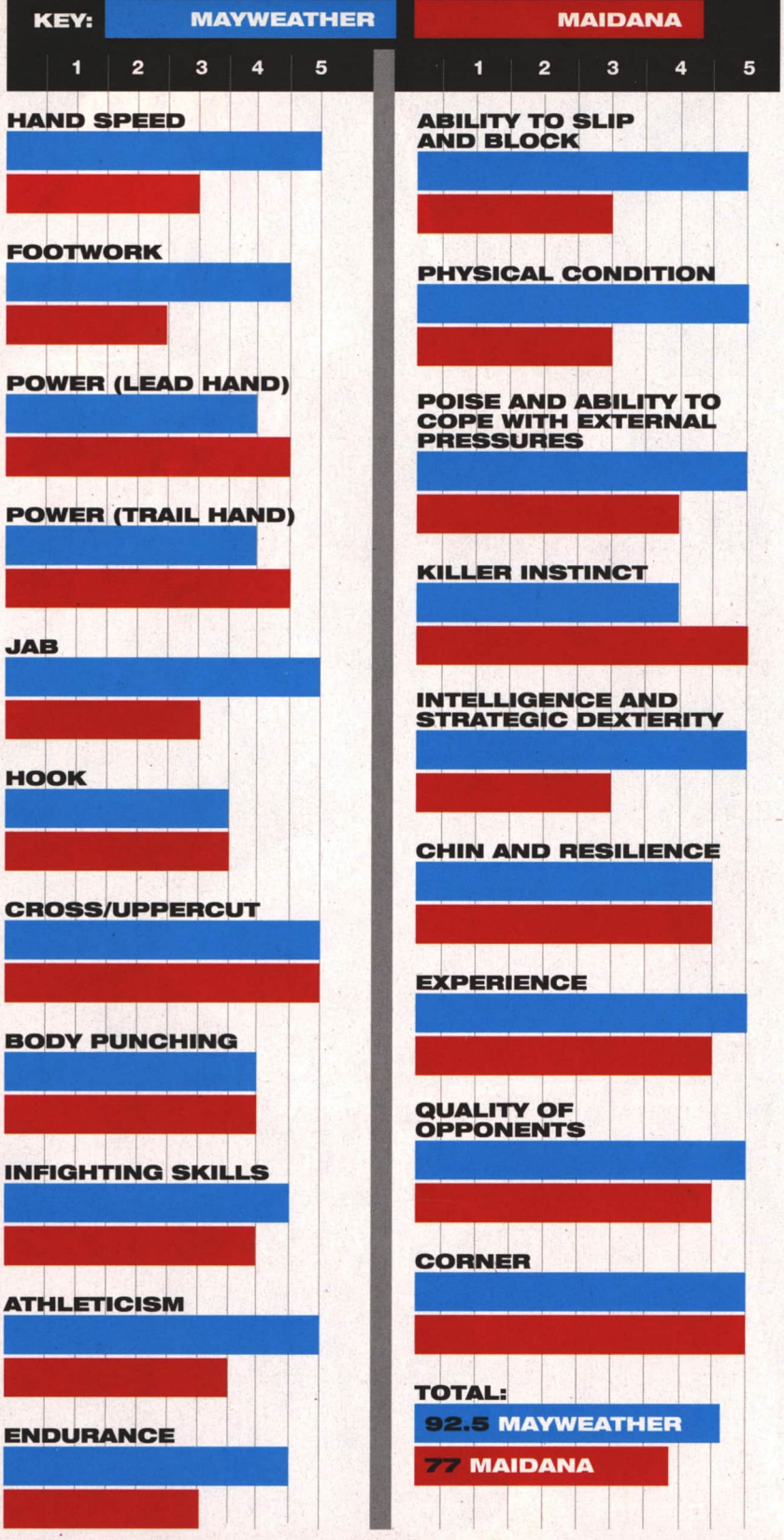
However, Maidana faces the real deal on May 3, not an immature imitation. The 30-year-old puncher has improved considerably since taking on Robert Garcia as his head coach after his unanimous decision loss to Devon Alexander in February 2012, but it's clear that he will always be troubled by boxers, such as Alexander, Khan and Andreas Kotelnik (to whom he also lost – albeit by narrow decisions).

In Mayweather, Maidana faces the ultimate boxer. Does he have any chance of upsetting the odds again? Here's how Mayweather and Maidana match up in 20 categories, both physical and intangible, with each fighter rated on a scale of 0 to 5. (A score of 100 would denote the perfect fighter.)



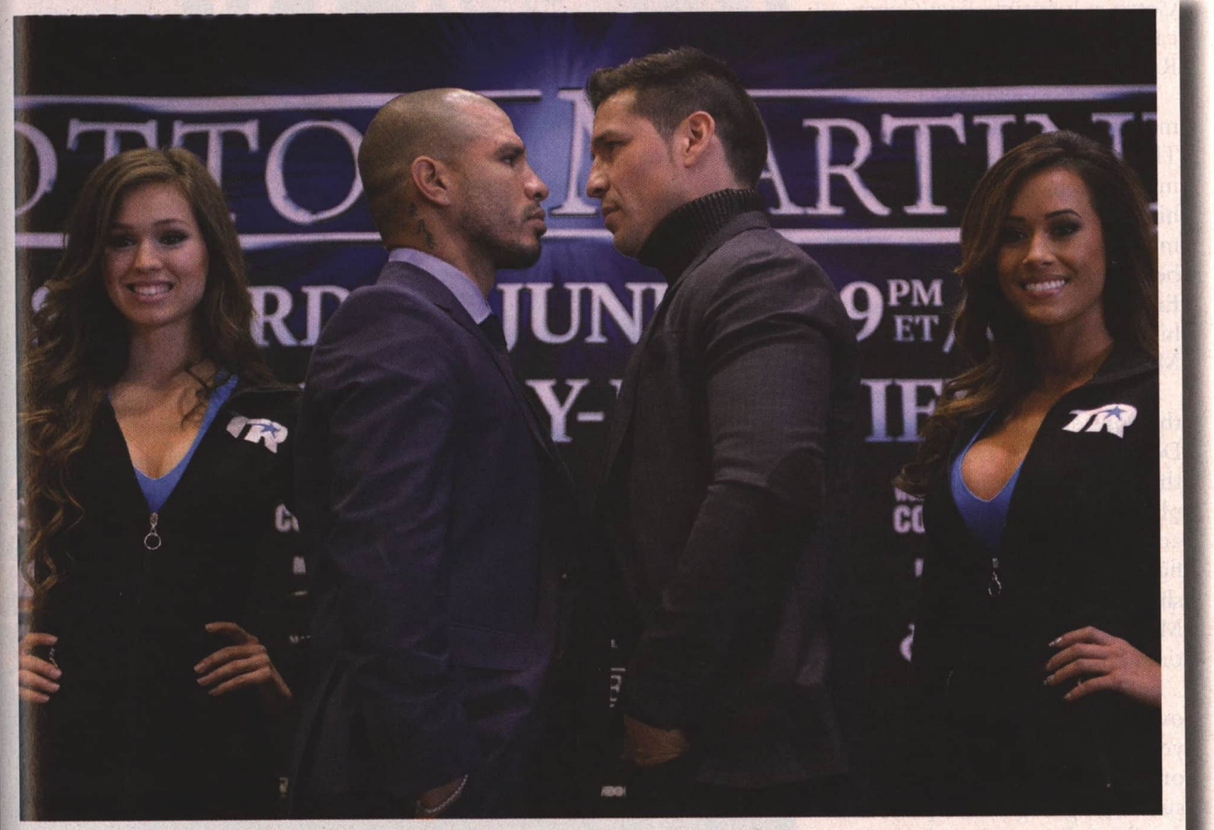
Floyd Mayweather Jr. is doing his part to sell his fight against Marcos Maidana to the media.





SUMMARY AND PREDICTION:
Maidana will start hard and fast, just as he did in the Broner fight, but he will not enjoy the early-rounds success he had against the cocky youngster because Mayweather will immediately stifle his offense by employing a quick stiff jab, lateral movement, and by holding the rugged challenger whenever the action gets too close for comfort. Mayweather, who will do his best to stay off the ropes, will consistently beat an increasingly frustrated Maidana to the punch with jabs and one-two combinations as his side-to-side movement and clinches sap Maidana's aggression and momentum. However, Maidana, who will grapple furiously when tied up, will keep swinging for the fences and thus remain dangerous. Mayweather will rock and stun Maidana with jab-hook and one-two combinations in the middle and late rounds but will respect the challenger's power and iron will and not go for a stoppage. Mayweather will win a one-sided unanimous decision.

GIMPY OR GREAT?



SERGIO MARTINEZ, 39, INSISTS HE'LL BE AT HIS BEST AGAINST MIGUEL COTTO ON JUNE 7 AFTER ALLOWING A YEAR FOR HIS BODY TO HEAL

By **Keith Idec**

Sergio Martinez will try to hang onto his belts when he fights Miguel Cotto on June 7.

Sergio Martinez's growing group of detractors contend that knockout artist Gennady Golovkin has supplanted Martinez as the No. 1 middleweight in boxing. Once as high as No. 3, the Argentine southpaw has slid down pound-for-pound lists as well. THE RING ranks him No. 5 among its Top 10.

Miguel Cotto dismissed Martinez as the subservient No. 2 man in the promotion of their HBO Pay Per View showdown even though Martinez is the defending RING and WBC

160-pound champion. Martinez, Cotto contends, has fought just once in a pay-per-view main event, seven times fewer than Cotto, a longtime East Coast cash cow for promoter Top Rank Inc.

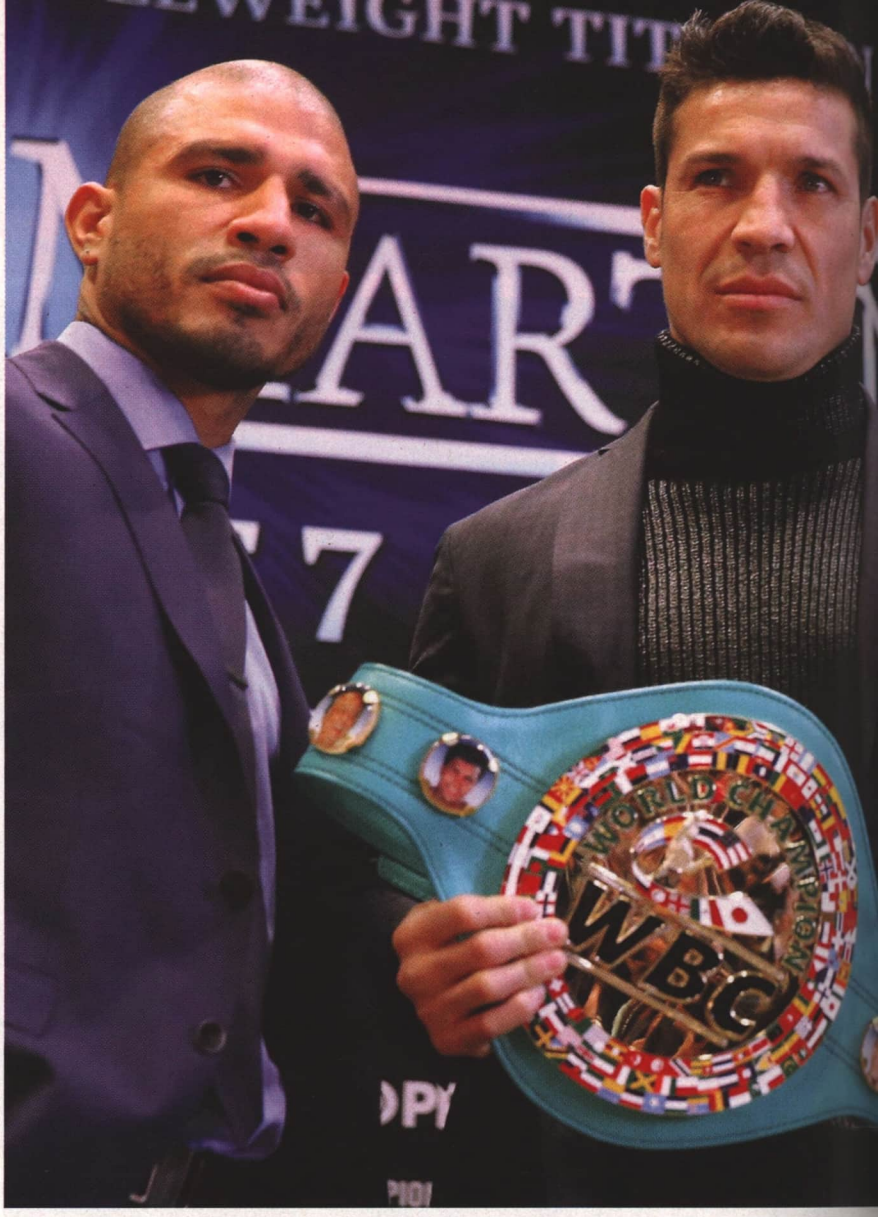
Those aforementioned figures matter little to Martinez. The unassuming star is more interested in the numbers 39, his age, and 13, the amount of months that will have passed between his last fight, against England's Martin Murray, and his June 7 battle with Cotto at Madison Square Garden.

Martinez hasn't had a layoff this long since he turned pro in December 1997, two years after the former cyclist and soccer player began boxing at the advanced age of 20. But after fighting through knee, hand and shoulder injuries against Murray, Martinez welcomed the extended time away from boxing.

Following his narrow victory over Murray in April of last year, he underwent surgery on his right knee – his third such operation – to repair cartilage, ligament and meniscus damage. Martinez also suffered a fracture in his left hand, which hindered him for 10-plus rounds, and worsened a shoulder injury he sustained several days before the fight.

Those injuries forced him to struggle against Murray, who was a huge underdog going into the bout. No matter how much time and money it cost the late-blooming boxer in the twilight of his Hall-of-Fame career, though, Martinez (51-2-2, 28 KOs) was determined to return only after he had healed properly.

He is certain he'll have the mobility against Cotto to effectively employ his unconventional style, which relies heavily on quick movement.



Martinez said that for the first time he'll be the bigger man in an important fight.

"The time off has been very helpful because of my age," Martinez said. "I have over 50 fights already, so the rest has done me well. I'm happy I could rest. That's where my experience will come in. I have plenty of experience. That's why [the long layoff] is not going to affect me."

As a precaution, Martinez wasn't cleared to do roadwork for the Cotto fight until March 31, just before the start of a two-month training camp Martinez planned to divide in half between Madrid and Miami. The roadwork restriction aside, Martinez felt much more confident entering this training camp than he did before beginning camp for the Murray fight. He underwent the second surgery on his right knee in November 2012, about two months after bravely surviving Julio Cesar Chavez's 12th-round rally, including a knockdown, to win a unanimous decision.

Martinez wasn't off crutches until Feb. 23, 2013. He started training camp for the Murray fight two days later.

"The operation wasn't done properly, and I had an infection,"

said Martinez, who's 7-0 since losing a debatable majority decision to Paul Williams four and a half years ago in Atlantic City, N.J. "It was very painful and very, very difficult to get through. Throughout the whole camp I was in pain. It never really healed well."

The injuries limited Martinez, whom Murray knocked down with a left-right combination in the eighth round of a 12-rounder Martinez won 115-112 on all three scorecards. Plus, the relentless rain produced atrocious conditions at the outdoor Club Atletico Velez Sarsfield, a soccer stadium in Buenos Aires.

Promoter Lou DiBella's admiration for Martinez grew in light of the obstacles he overcame.

"He was hurt weeks before that fight," DiBella said. "And the conditions were horrible. There was a tropical storm, and the fight was outdoors. There was a wet ring mat. And he still won the fight. It was closer than we thought it was going to be going in, but he won the fight. And the way he won it was by sucking it up and winning the last couple rounds, which he did win."

Martinez fell to the canvas again in the 10th round, but referee Massimo Barrovecchio ruled that he slipped. DiBella says he watched the replay "17 times, from 18 different angles" and is convinced it was more the result of a gimpy Martinez slipping on a damp canvas than the Murray right hand, which, at best, grazed Martinez's head.

While far from his best performance, bringing HBO's cameras and a raucous crowd that approached 50,000 to one of Argentina's greatest venues marked the crowning achievement of Martinez's 16-year professional career.

"I'm very proud because it was hard work," Martinez said. "I knew this was the path I had to take to get to this point. I had to leave my family, I had to travel. I'm very, very proud of what I've done. I'm very proud that the Argentine people recognized all the hard work and all the labor it took for me to get to that point. And I'm very proud they came out to support me. That's why I gave my all and extra. That's what people like to see."

Martinez will enter a vastly different environment June 7. Madison Square Garden is Cotto's home away from home, and their fight will take place the night before the annual National Puerto Rican Day Parade in Manhattan, the weekend on which Cotto will fight for the fifth time since 2005. Martinez will have his share of flag-waving Argentine fans in attendance, just as he did during the Chavez fight in Las Vegas and at the Garden press conference to announce the Cotto fight. But one of boxing's most genuine good guys accepts that he'll enter hostile territory as the hated heel the night of June 7, when a boisterous, decidedly pro-Cotto crowd of about 20,000 will pack the Garden again.

'IT'S FAMILIAR TERRITORY. THE LAST 10, 12 YEARS I'VE BEEN BOXING IN OTHER BOXERS' HOMES. SO IT'S TYPICAL FOR ME TO COME INTO SOMEONE'S HOMETOWN AND BEAT HIM.'
– SERGIO MARTINEZ

Martinez isn't intimidated. He relishes the opportunity to prevent Cotto from becoming the first fighter from Puerto Rico to win world titles in four weight classes.

"It's familiar territory," Martinez said. "The last 10, 12 years I've been boxing in other boxers' homes. So it's typical for me to come into someone's hometown and beat him."

While Cotto will enjoy a home-ring advantage, Martinez believes being the bigger man will be a huge plus for him, albeit an unfamiliar edge. The 5-foot-10 Martinez, probably better suited to fight at junior middleweight, is three inches taller than Cotto, who began his pro career at junior welterweight 13 years ago and will fight at middleweight for the first time.

"For the first time, I'm actually going to fight someone smaller than me," Martinez said. "I'm used to fighting all these big guys. For the first time, I'm going to be the big guy in the ring. And that's the big difference. That's going to be to my advantage."

The affable, impossibly polite Martinez usually offers opponents the same healthy amount of respect he shows everyone else. Cotto, however, has aggravated the typically pleasant Argentine star.

Martinez never forgot what he considered Cotto's disrespectful treatment of people during a chance meeting at a television studio in Mexico several years ago.

"I just didn't like the way he behaved around everyone else," Martinez recalled. "Even [with] the people that bring you water, bring you coffee, I found that disrespectful. It wasn't so much about how he treated me. It was how he treated everyone else. If

it was to me, I'm his rival, so I could understand some animosity. But not with other people.

"It bothers me because he's not better than anyone else. I'm not saying he's less than anyone else, but he isn't better than anyone else. Like [Floyd] Mayweather, myself or even someone who's sleeping in a car or on the street, we all deserve respect. That's how I feel people should be treated."

The ever-stoic Cotto disagreed with Martinez's account of what happened in Mexico, though Martinez maintains, "He's so arrogant, he won't see it."

Nevertheless, the animosity among two of the sport's most entertaining and marketable combatants intensified during drawn-out negotiations to finalize their fight. Cotto (38-4, 31 KOs) demanded to enter the ring last, to be announced second and to have his name appear first on all promotional materials even though Martinez is the defending champion.

Cotto contends he is the star of this show, and Martinez must meet all of his demands. The Puerto Rican is, after all, the gate attraction who's largely responsible for selling more than 120,000 tickets to his eight fights at Madison Square Garden from 2005 to 2012. He hasn't been shy, either, about reminding Martinez of their roles.

"Two times in my career, I fought once with [Manny] Pacquiao and once with Mayweather, and I understood they are the side 'A' of the equation," Cotto said. "I just understood my position and I'm here just for work. Sergio, here, is the side 'B.' I'm the guy who's going to sell tickets and put people in here. With that, I don't underestimate Sergio. I know who Sergio Martinez is. He's a great fighter. The only thing

Martinez's body seemed to fall apart in the final round of his victory over Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.

he has to do is understand the boxing business."

Martinez might be more apt to agree with Cotto's claim if he hadn't drawn a capacity crowd of 49,000 for the Murray fight. Adoring Argentine fans braved a torrential downpour and extreme humidity that night to support Martinez, who was mostly unknown and unappreciated even in his home country before he headed to Spain in search of better boxing opportunities 12 years ago.

Martinez returned home a conquering hero for the Murray match, with wins over former champions Kelly Pavlik, Sergei Dzinziruk, Chavez and Williams on his record, as well as a bulging bank account after 10 straight appearances on HBO or HBO Pay Per View. Cotto is the more proven pay-per-view veteran, but Martinez's first pay-per-view fight, a mostly dominating victory over Chavez, drew 500,000 buys. Bob Arum, whose Top Rank Inc. promotes Cotto, expects Cotto-Martinez to do at least 500,000 buys because this figures to be a highly competitive brawl between proven attractions who typically provide plenty of entertainment.

Win or lose, the suddenly injury-prone Martinez isn't sure how many more times he'll fight. That likely will depend on how his body holds up during and after the Cotto bout.

"I can't answer any of that right now," Martinez said. "My focus is on June 7 and Miguel Cotto. After that, I can answer all those questions."

Martinez must first answer a lot of questions against Cotto. RING

Keith Idec covers boxing for *The Record*, of Woodland Park, N.J. He can be reached on Twitter @ Idecboxing.

BONUS BEST I FACED

Sergio Martinez called two-time opponent Paul Williams (right) his "nemesis."

SERGIO MARTINEZ IS LIVING PROOF THAT A BOXER DOESN'T NECESSARILY HAVE TO START AT A YOUNG AGE TO SUCCEED.

By **Anson Wainwright**

"Maravilla" had dabbled in cycling and soccer when, at 20 years old, he picked up boxing gloves. After a short amateur career, he turned pro at 22 in 1997. He learned on the fly – first in Argentina, then in Spain and the U.K., and finally in the U.S. – until he became a contender in the late 2000s.

A series of exceptional performances between 2009 and 2012 allowed Martinez to crack everyone's pound-for-pound list. That included a decision over Kelly Pavlik to win THE RING middleweight title and a sensational one-punch knockout in his rematch with Paul Williams in 2010, after which he was named RING Fighter of the Year.

Since then, Martinez has stopped Sergei Dzinziruk, Darren Barker and Matthew Macklin, and outpointed Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. and Martin Murray.

The Argentine chased superfights with the likes of Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao in pursuit of fame and fortune, offering to fight them at a catchweight of 150 pounds, but neither took the bait. His consolation prize is Puerto Rican star Miguel Cotto, his opponent on June 7 in New York City.

Now 39, Martinez has had problems with injuries that have hampered his activity and performances, including a tough challenge against Murray in Buenos Aires, but he will have had more than a year to mend before facing Cotto.

Martinez said his most special moment in boxing was "my first victory in England against Richard Williams" in 2003, his first truly important win, and then added "the knockout in the second fight against Paul Williams," which made him a star.

Away from boxing, Martinez is an activist raising awareness of bullying and domestic violence against women. He has appeared in the Argentine version of *Dancing with the Stars*, he does stand-up comedy in Argentina and is getting into theater in Spain. He also has started his own Spain-based promotional company, Maravilla Box, promoting IBF junior featherweight champion Kiko Martinez.

Sergio Martinez (51-2-2, 28 knockouts) took time out of his busy schedule to speak with THE RING about the best he has faced in 10 key categories.

BEST BOXER

Sergei Dzinziruk: Very good amateur background, very smart. He was a big challenge for me. I'm very proud of that fight.

BEST JAB

Dzinziruk: His jab was very fast, it was his best weapon. His nickname is "Razor." I know why.

BEST DEFENSE

Darren Barker: It was very difficult to hit him with a clean blow. His guard was very closed. I had to work a lot for the openings.

BEST CHIN

Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.: Any other fighter would have lost by KO with half of the blows that Chavez received.

BEST PUNCHER

Kelly Pavlik: When he punched me in the head, I felt the pain in my feet! He had electrical power.

FASTEST HANDS

Dzinziruk: He didn't throw a lot of blows, but he had very good accuracy.

FASTEST FEET

Paul Williams: He moved very fast and had great timing despite his height.

SMARTEST

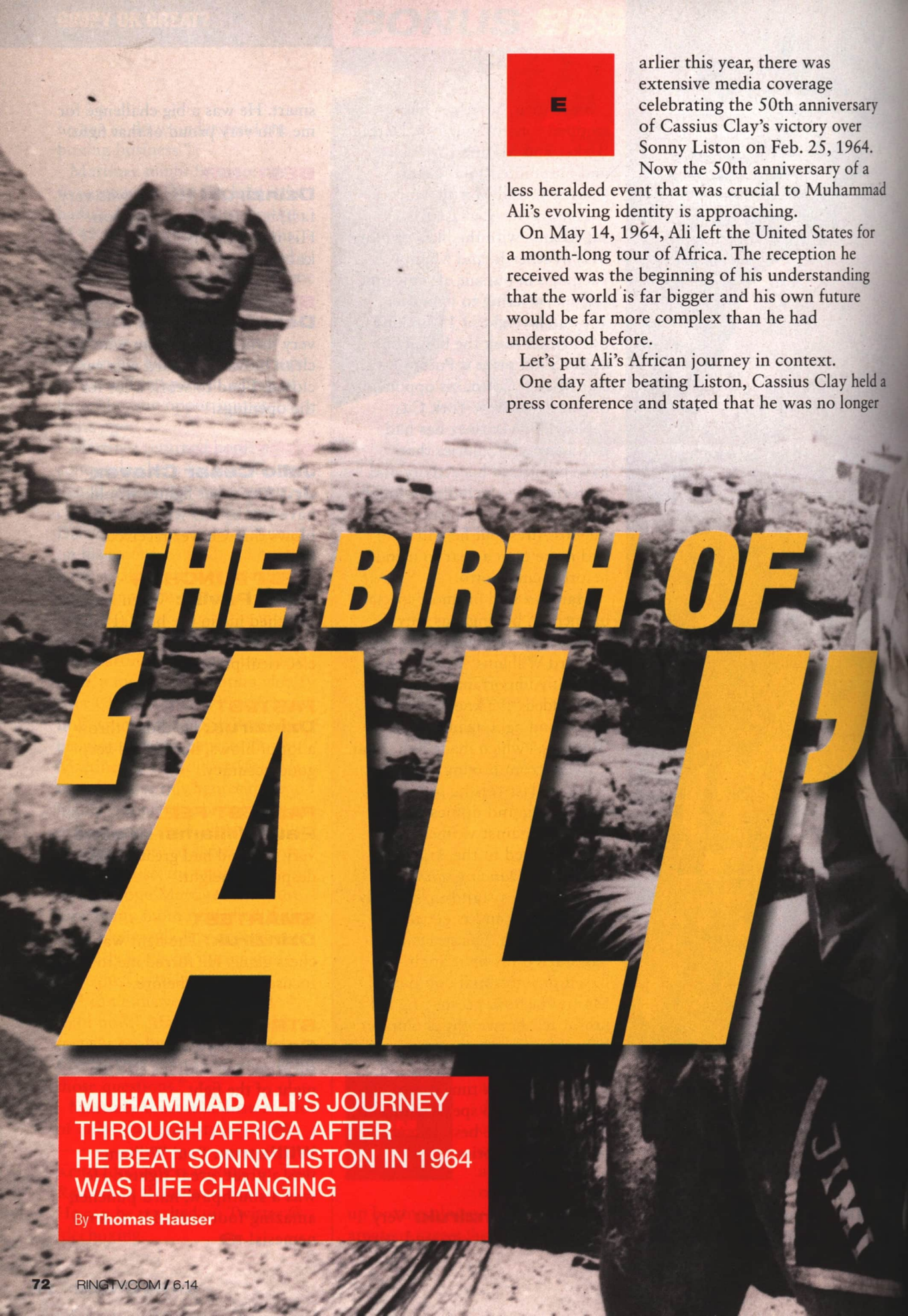
Dzinziruk: The fight was a chess game. He forced me to stay focused as never before.

STRONGEST

Pavlik: Very, very strong. He surprised me with his size the night of the fight.

BEST OVERALL

Williams: Paul Williams was a great, great fighter. He was a southpaw, hard puncher, amazing footwork. He was my nemesis! RING



THE BIRTH OF 'ALI'

MUHAMMAD ALI'S JOURNEY THROUGH AFRICA AFTER HE BEAT SONNY LISTON IN 1964 WAS LIFE CHANGING

By **Thomas Hauser**

Earlier this year, there was extensive media coverage celebrating the 50th anniversary of Cassius Clay's victory over Sonny Liston on Feb. 25, 1964. Now the 50th anniversary of a less heralded event that was crucial to Muhammad Ali's evolving identity is approaching.

On May 14, 1964, Ali left the United States for a month-long tour of Africa. The reception he received was the beginning of his understanding that the world is far bigger and his own future would be far more complex than he had understood before.

Let's put Ali's African journey in context.

One day after beating Liston, Cassius Clay held a press conference and stated that he was no longer

Muhammad Ali was treated like royalty when he visited Egypt in 1964.

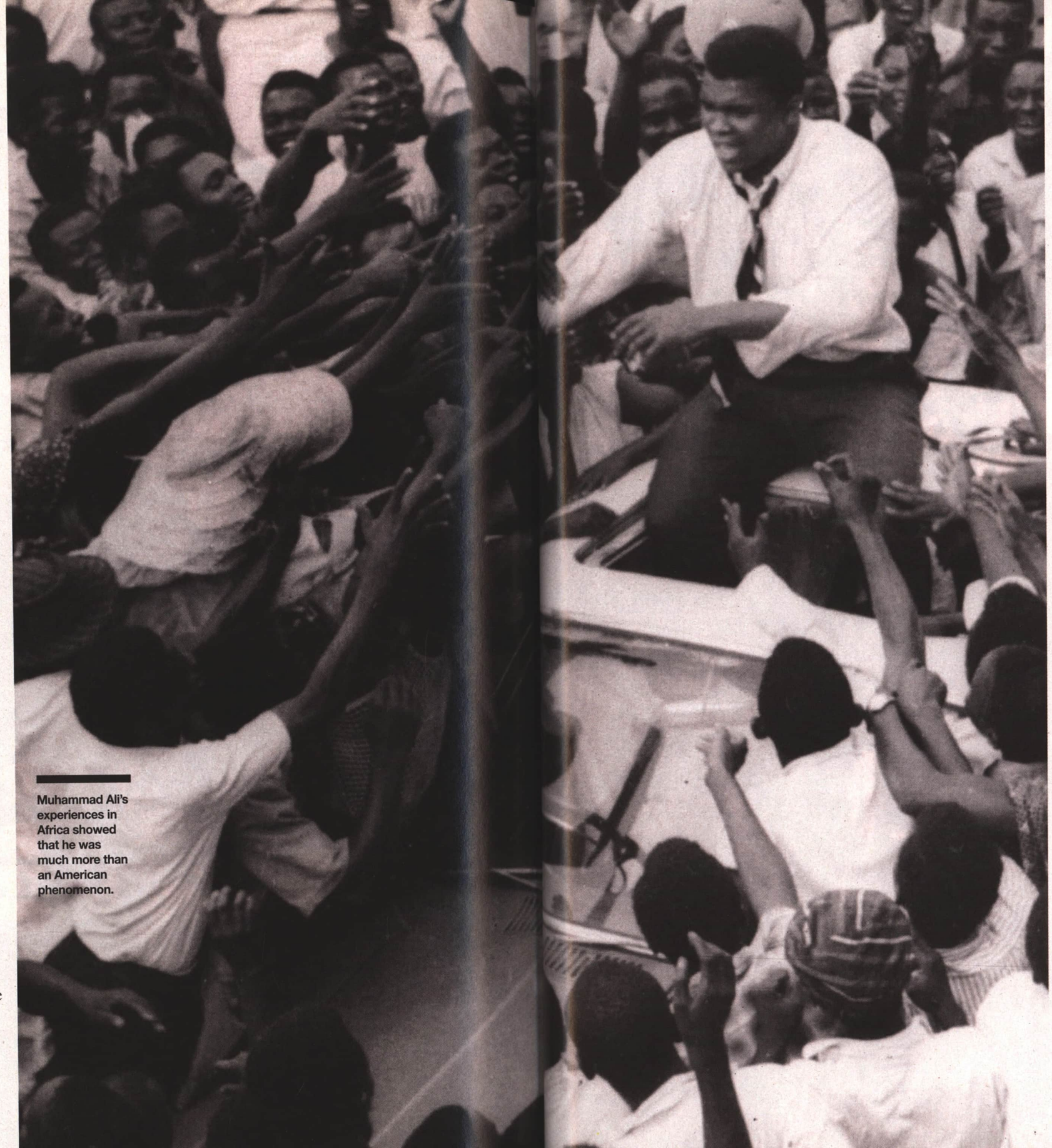
a Christian. On Feb. 27, at a second press conference, he told the media that he adhered to the principles of a black separatist religion known as the Nation of Islam and was a follower of its leader, Elijah Muhammad. The following week, he toured the United Nations with Malcolm X and was photographed with various African delegates. On March 6, Elijah Muhammad gave the recently-crowned champion a new name.

"This Clay name has no divine meaning," the Nation of Islam leader decreed. "I hope he will accept being called by a better name. Muhammad Ali is what I will give him for as long as he believes in Allah and follows me."

That set the stage for Ali's trip to Africa. The architect of the journey was Osman Karriem, who'd been brought in by Malcolm X a year earlier to serve as Clay's administrative aid and de facto road manager.

"To me, it was necessary to give the kid some breathing room," Karriem later recounted. "There was so much going on [in the United States], and this was a way to take him out of the line of fire. We'd been to the United Nations together, and a number of African ambassadors had stopped to acknowledge him. So I followed up on that and kicked the idea around with Malcolm."

Ali's entourage in Africa included his brother Rahman, Herbert Muhammad (one of Elijah Muhammad's eight children and Ali's future manager), longtime friend Howard Bingham and Karriem. The trip began in Ghana, where thousands of people cheered Ali's arrival and treated him like a national hero. In the capital city of Accra, he kissed babies, boxed an exhibition, visited factories and schools, and met with Ghanaian president Kwame Nkrumah.



Muhammad Ali's experiences in Africa showed that he was much more than an American phenomenon.

"In America, everything is white," Ali told his audience. "I'm glad to be here with my true people."

After two weeks in Ghana, Ali traveled to Nigeria, where he received a polite but less enthusiastic welcome. Then he journeyed to Egypt, where tumult and adulation reigned. Ali visited the pyramids and met with Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser. Finally, he returned to the United States, leaving one bitter memory behind.

It happened in Ghana.

Malcolm X had split with Elijah Muhammad following an early-spring pilgrimage to Mecca, where his views underwent transformation. Just as Malcolm's eyes had been opened by Elijah to one new universe, now he was seeing another, and his attitude toward white people changed.

"For twelve long years," Malcolm wrote, "I lived in the narrow-minded confines of the straightjacket world created by a strong belief that Elijah Muhammad was a messenger direct from God and my faith in what I now see to be a pseudo-religious philosophy that he preaches. My pilgrimage broadened my scope. It blessed me with a new insight. In two weeks in the Holy Land, I saw all races, all colors, in true brotherhood! In unity! Living as one! Worshiping as one! In the past, I have made sweeping indictments of all white people. I never will be guilty of that again, as I know now that some white people are truly sincere, that some truly are capable of being brotherly toward a black man. The true Islam has shown me that a blanket indictment of all white people is as wrong as when whites make blanket indictments against blacks."

"When Malcolm broke with

Muhammad Ali (center) visiting an Egyptian iron and steel mill in June 1964.

"IT WAS IN AFRICA THAT ALI BECAME SOMETHING HE HADN'T BEEN BEFORE ... PEOPLE WERE COMING OUT OF NOWHERE, LINING THE ROAD CALLING 'ALI! ALI!"

— OSMAN KARRIEM

Elijah," Ali would recall years later, "I stayed with Elijah. I believed that Malcolm was wrong, and Elijah was God's Messenger. I was in Miami [on Feb. 21, 1965] when I heard Malcolm had been shot to death. It was a pity and a disgrace he died like that because what Malcolm saw was right. And after he left us, we went his way anyway. Color don't make a man a devil. It's the heart, soul and mind that count."

But that understanding was in Ali's future. And it was far from his mind on his second day in Africa when he and Malcolm saw each other in the lobby of the Hotel Ambassador in Ghana.

Ali snubbed him.

"Did you get a look at Malcolm," the champion derisively told reporters. "Dressed in that funny white robe and wearing a beard and walking with that cane that looked like a prophet's stick. Man, he's gone. He's gone so far out, he's out completely. Nobody listens to Malcolm anymore."

Alex Haley, who worked closely with Malcolm in crafting *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, said later of that encounter, "I remember Malcolm's great pride whenever he would talk of, as he phrased it, 'my younger brother.' Malcolm saw Ali as someone who had real capability to be a messenger in America and tell young black people what was going on. It wasn't important to him that Ali take his side in his differences with Elijah Muhammad. He simply wanted Ali to be free and strong."

"Malcolm was not one to talk much," Haley continued. "He was very protective of himself and his friends personally, so it was only very slowly and subtly that I knew something was amiss. Then, finally, he told me that, when he was in Africa, he had crossed paths with Muhammad Ali, and Ali had avoided him. They didn't speak. And I will tell you, that hurt Malcolm more than any other person turning away from him that I know of. Malcolm was very hurt by it all."

But there is another, more positive legacy affixed to Ali's 1964 African journey

"The way it worked out," Karriem later observed, "the trip planted the seeds for Ali's worldwide popularity."

And then Karriem recalled a moment when, he believes, history turned.

"It was in Africa that Ali became something he hadn't been before. We were driving down a road in Ghana. Usually, there was nobody on the roads. Outside of the capital, it was just towns 40 miles apart with nothing in between. One day, we got in the car with no plan. And five minutes after we started driving, there was like a beating of drums. Then people started showing up on the road."

"'Ali! Ali!'"

"I'd never seen anything like it before. I was sitting there with this kid, and people were coming out of nowhere, lining the road, calling 'Ali! Ali!' I saw this kid sitting there. He didn't say anything. It was like he was hypnotized. Do you have any idea what it must have been like for him to see thousands of people materialize out of nowhere and know they were there just for him? That day, I saw the birth of a new human being. It was like Cassius Clay came to an end and Muhammad Ali emerged." RING

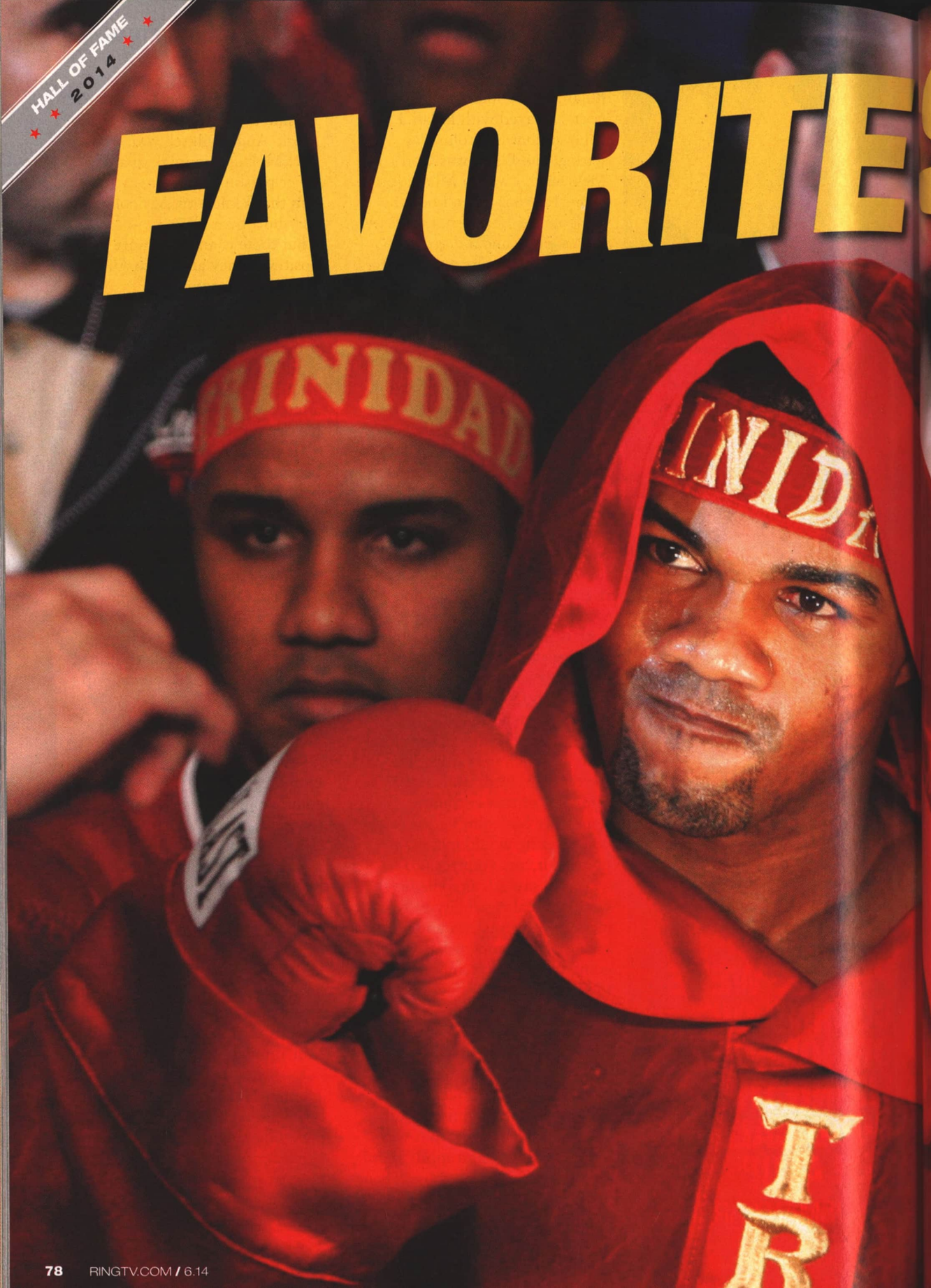
Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book (*Reflections: Conversations, Essays, and Other Writings*) has just been published by the University of Arkansas Press.

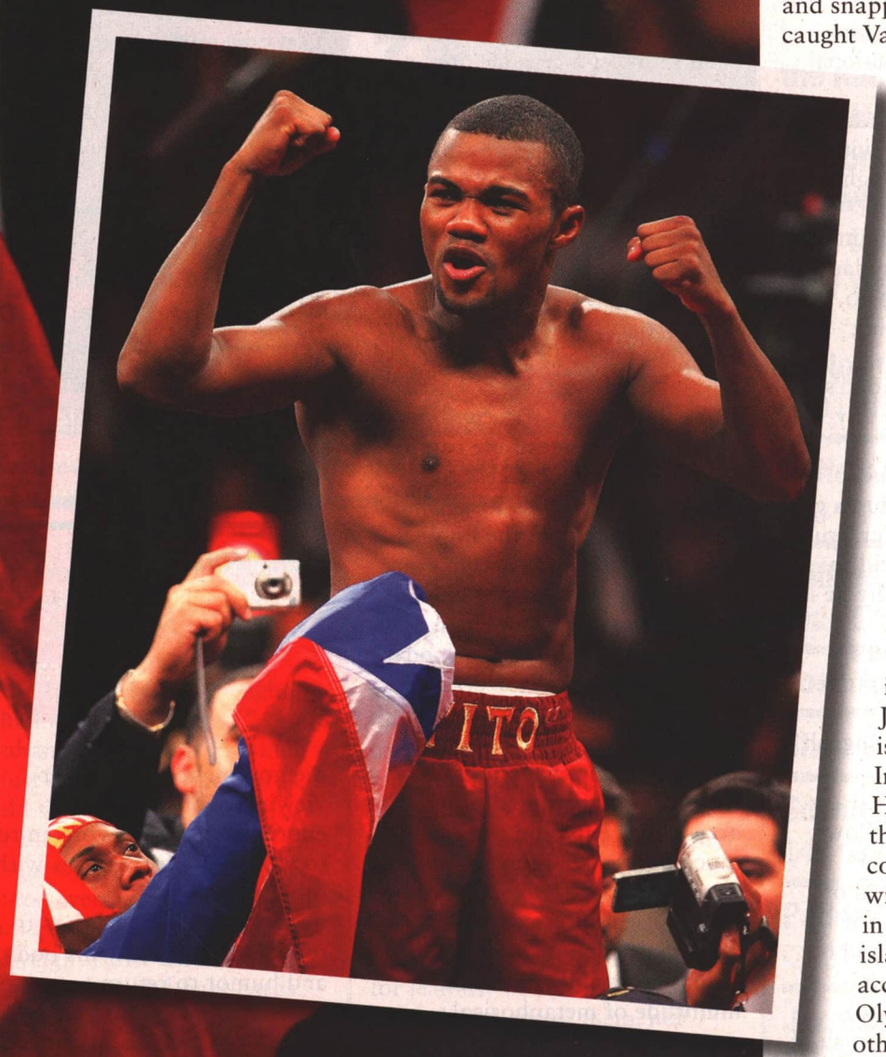
HALL OF FAME 2014

FAVORITE SON

FELIX 'TITO' TRINIDAD GAVE FANS IN PUERTO RICO ONE THRILL AFTER ANOTHER. THEY IN TURN GAVE HIM THEIR LOVE.

By **Bart Barry**





Felix Trinidad might be the most popular fighter ever in Puerto Rico.

Fifty-seven seconds into the 12th round of his 2000 championship match with American junior middleweight Fernando Vargas, Puerto Rican Felix "Tito" Trinidad bounced to the canvas from his perch atop the second rope in a neutral corner. He strode at Vargas, tilted leftward for an instant and snapped another hook. It caught Vargas flush and dropped him for a fourth and penultimate time. Trinidad took two large strides, jumped on the turnbuckle once more, and thrust his right glove in the air. Vargas beat the count. Trinidad bounded off his perch again, sprinted across the mat and finished him.

If it is possible for a decent man to delight in the athletic feat of pummeling another to temporary unconsciousness, Trinidad delighted in it that evening. On June 8, when Trinidad is inducted in the International Boxing Hall of Fame, it will be that sense of joy and the connection it engendered with his countrymen in Puerto Rico, an island where boxing has accounted for as many Olympic medals as all other sports combined, for which Trinidad is remembered most fondly.

"Thank you to the people for all the moments that you lived together with me, for all the

moments you invited me to. Thank you for all the moments you went to look for me at the airport, for all the moments you came over and gave me your blessings," Trinidad said at the December press conference in Puerto Rico announcing his selection.

"Sixto Escobar, Pedro Montanez, Jose 'Chegui' Torres, Carlos Ortiz, Wilfredo Gomez, Wilfredo Benitez, Chapo Rosario and referee Joe Cortez have been the other Puerto Ricans recognized by the International Boxing Hall of Fame," editorialized the national daily *El Nuevo Dia*. "Trinidad is without doubt the most popular fighter in the history of Puerto Rico."

"I haven't seen, in my mind, a quote-unquote next Trinidad," said Bobby Goodman, who, as vice president of boxing operations at Don King Productions, made Trinidad's matches. "I haven't seen any quite like him."

"Tito was one of the most devastating, exciting fighters of his era," said matchmaker Bruce Trampler. "He was a thrill to watch. It's easy to see why he is an icon in Puerto Rico."

The very thing Trinidad's American supporters might've found lamentable – his indifference to learning English and the tight restrictions on his availability – helped make him immortal to fellow Latin Americans. It placed him squarely in a tradition of crossover stars who did not cross over so much as stand on their countries' and cultures' sides of the linguistic divide, saying, in their native Spanish, if America was interested in them, it could make a compromise of its own.

"He had no remorse for stating again and again that his allegiance was to Puerto Rico," said Alan Hopper, who, as vice president of public relations at Don King Productions, handled Trinidad's publicity for nine years. "And Puerto Rico only."

"Trinidad is in a very select trinity," said Seth Abraham, the president of HBO Sports when Trinidad came to the network. "A holy trinity."

That trinity began with Panamanian Roberto Duran, continued to Mexican Julio Cesar Chavez and ended with Trinidad.

"It's almost a crusade, it's almost a form of idolatry," said Abraham. "If I think of the great fighters that I saw at HBO and the Garden, I'm not saying they're the best, but I've never seen a following as I saw with Chavez, Duran and Felix."

The language and cultural barrier that framed Trinidad was one his father and trainer, Felix "Papa" Trinidad Sr., used as a convenient sequestration system during his son's training camps. Complaints about access to Trinidad, ubiquitous for a time among members of the English-speaking press corps, were ever rare among members of the Puerto Rican press, an army of scribes who found their island's hero preternaturally accessible.

"Americans want to adopt people as their own," said Hopper. "There were those in the media that wanted more access, and Papa did not allow much access. He didn't allow Americans the type of access the Puerto Rican press was allowed on the island."

That accessibility found a multitude of metaphorical expressions, the most visible of such, often, being the straw hat Trinidad wore during his winding, celebratory and nearly interminable ringwalks. No image of Trinidad is more memorable to the pay-per-viewing public than what enormous grins he wore en route to violent confrontations with other men.

Afforded 24 or so hours to rehydrate and allow his body and humor to return to a natural state, Trinidad would emerge from a dressing room and promenade to ringside, nodding, singing, waving and flashing his gigantic smile. The joy of a fight, the particular thrill very few find in giving and receiving

CLASS OF 2014

The 12 boxing figures who will be inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in June

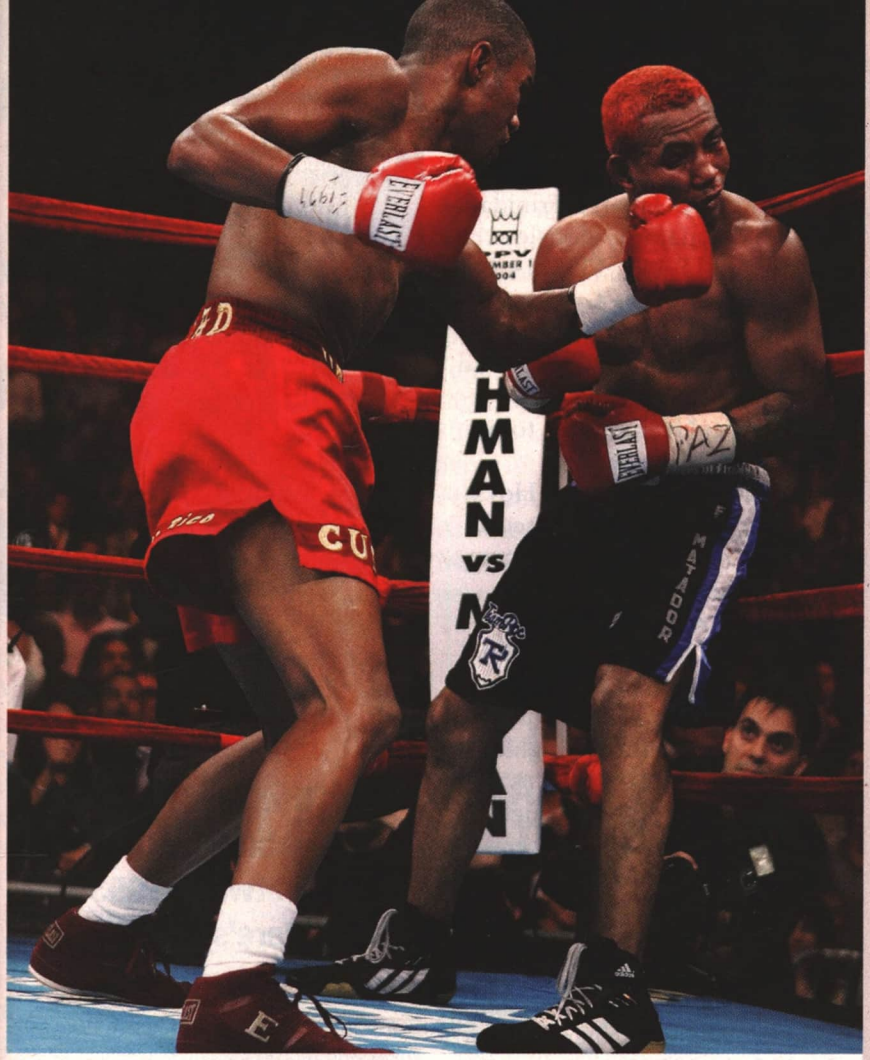
MODERN
Last bout no earlier than 1943
JOE CALZAGHE
OSCAR DE LA HOYA
FELIX TRINIDAD

OLD-TIMER
Last bout must fall between 1893 and 1942
GEORGE CHANEY
CHARLES LEDOUX
MIKE O'DOWD

PIONEER
Last pro bout in or before 1892
TOM ALLEN

NON-PARTICIPANT
EUGENE CORRI, referee
BARRY HEARN, promoter
RICHARD STEELE, referee

OBSERVER
GRAHAM HOUSTON, journalist
NEIL LEIFER, photographer



Trinidad's victory over Ricardo Mayorga (right) in 2004 was his last.

concussive blows, and the smile it formed on Trinidad's face, secured Puerto Ricans' adoration for him.

"Ray Leonard loved to fight. He had a wide, wide grin," said Abraham. "But if you're asking me just on the smile-meter, I would say that Felix is equal with Ray."

"Felix was one of my favorite fighters, ever," said Jesse James Leija, a former junior lightweight titlist who shared training camps and fight cards with Trinidad early in their careers. "Just the way he carried himself in the ring, the way he carried himself outside the ring. Always smiling."

Trinidad was a manifestation of masculinity tempered by boyishness, a handsome man seemingly oblivious of his magnetism, one who wanted the sporting company of other men as they did manly and athletic things, while a sea of women unquietly desired him. Unlike his longtime rival Oscar De La Hoya, Trinidad was not marketed as a sex symbol but a national hero. He was promoted as a figure many times larger than the petty resentments of men, or desires of women: Men hadn't a reason for jealousy because "Tito" was about being one of them, not looking around them at their girlfriends and sisters.

De La Hoya was many times a larger star in the United States while preparing for his eighth defense of the WBC

PUERTO RICANS IN THE HALL

Ten native Puerto Ricans have been elected to the International Hall of Fame, which is remarkable given the nation's current population of only 3.6 million. The list (including the weights at which they held titles and the year they were inducted):

Carlos Ortiz: 135 and 140 (1991)

Wilfredo Gomez: 122, 126 and 130 (1995)

Wilfred Benitez: 140, 147 and 154 (1996)

Jose Torres: 175 (1997)

Sixto Escobar: 118 (2002)

Edwin Rosario: 135 and 140 (2006)

Pedro Montanez: None (2007)

Joe Cortez: Referee (2011)

Cocoa Kid: None (2012)

Felix Trinidad: 147, 154 and 160 (2014)

welterweight title than Trinidad was in 1999, despite the Puerto Rican's then-75-month reign as IBF champion. The rivalry culminated, as boxing things often do, in an anticlimactic if controversial spectacle at Las Vegas' Mandalay Bay on Sept. 18, 1999. If, as the old saw has it, styles make fights, De La Hoya's style and Trinidad's made them not fight.

"I didn't think it was a particularly strong matchup because of speed," remembered Goodman. "De La Hoya had such speed."

The fight, organized and promoted around Mexican Independence Day weekend, a nod to De La Hoya's heritage, not Trinidad's, saw Trinidad sacrifice his last-to-ringwalk right as the longer-reigning champion so he could choose what gloves the men wore. In the best foreshadowing their fight held, Trinidad chose puncher's gloves made by the Mexican company Cleto Reyes, gloves noteworthy for wrapping a protective coat of horsehair, not foam, around the knuckles. It would be Trinidad who sought to hurt his opponent for all 36 minutes, in a title-unification match that saw De La Hoya concentrate disproportionately more on avoiding blows than landing them, particularly in a fabled pair of championship rounds during which De La Hoya made frantic circles away from Trinidad in an anxious race to the 12th-round finish line.

Trinidad's inability to make regular contact with De La Hoya, particularly in their match's opening six rounds, allowed De La Hoya to amass a lead in many observer' minds that was mathematically insurmountable when Trinidad's rally and De La Hoya's pronounced fade finally began. Official scores favored Trinidad, though, by majority decision: 114-114, 115-113, 115-114.

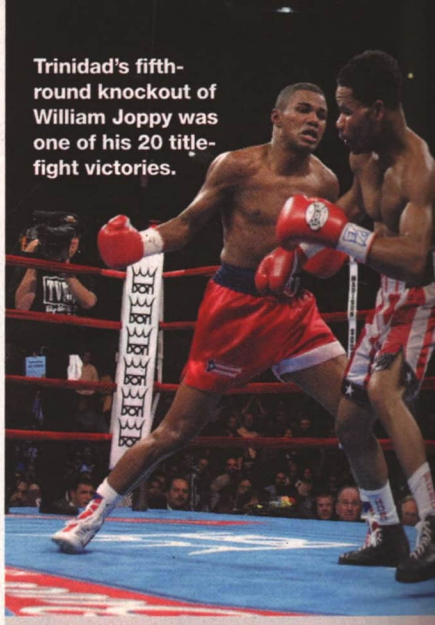
"When I meet De La Hoya [in June], I will shake his hand and congratulate him," Trinidad said at his December press conference. "He deserves to be in the Hall of Fame."

The victory over De La Hoya, one that kept Trinidad's record unblemished, forced the winner into a prominent place in the American consciousness. He would remain there for the final nine matches of a career that continued to accelerate until a 2001 loss to middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins and then meandered through a 29-month retirement between 2002 and 2004, a knockout victory over Nicaraguan Ricardo Mayorga, a lopsided 2005 loss to American Winky Wright, a 32-month retirement and finally a decision loss to American Roy Jones Jr. in 2008.

Trinidad's career ended in consecutive losses, as most prizefighters' careers do, but it was not shameful. Fighting a fellow faded but all-time great in Jones, and fighting him at 170 pounds, 23 above the welterweight limit at which Trinidad spent most of his career, Trinidad acquitted himself honorably and entertainingly, causing Madison Square Garden to vibrate for a sixth and final time with chants of "Tito! Tito! Tito!"

"I remember he used to have his back foot up, and I liked that style," said trainer and former three-division titlist Ann Wolfe. "He could box, he could bang, he could do anything."

"The only time I ever saw an edge to Tito was after Fernando Vargas got into it with him at a press conference," said



Trinidad's fifth-round knockout of William Joppy was one of his 20 title-fight victories.

CHAMPION'S CHAMPION

Felix Trinidad was all but unbeatable in world title fights between 1993 and 2001. Here's a look:

Won the IBF welterweight title by stopping Maurice Blocker in two rounds in 1993.

Made 15 successful defenses of that belt, the second longest run ever at 147 pounds, and later won the WBC version.

Stopped 13 of 16 opponents in welterweight title fights.

Won the WBA junior middleweight title by outpointing David Reid in 2000.

Made two successful defenses of his WBA 154-pound title, both knockouts, and added the IBF version.

Won the WBA middleweight title by stopping William Joppy in five rounds in 2001.

Lost his belt to Bernard Hopkins by 12th-round TKO in 2001 and never again fought for a world title.

Finished with a record of 20-1 in world title fights, winning 16 by knockout.

Hopper. "He was shook up after we left the stage. Through a translator, Tito told me, 'We have an old saying in Puerto Rico: 'It's one thing to call out the devil, but it's quite another to see him coming.'

"Fernando Vargas could call him out all he wanted, but [Tito] was coming for him."

The fight for which Trinidad is remembered most fondly, the match of his that stands above others for its competitiveness, brutality and decisiveness, is the one he made with Vargas at Mandalay Bay on Dec. 2, 2000, one that came 14½ months after Trinidad decisioned De La Hoya, featured six collective knockdowns, including Trinidad on the mat in Round 4, three collective point deductions for low blows, including two by the Puerto Rican, and ended with Vargas on the blue mat at 1:33 of the 12th. It was a match that presented Trinidad's extraordinary offensive arsenal, occasional recklessness and passion for a spectacle in which two men stand and fight until one is unfit to go on.

"One of the greatest fights of all time between two, very talented, undefeated kids," said Goodman. "[Tito] dug down deep ... and so did Vargas. But in the end, Tito took Vargas apart."

The fight changed both men, altering dramatically Vargas' career trajectory. Six months later, Trinidad climbed weight classes again, this time to participate in promoter Don King's middleweight tournament. Making his 160-pound debut in Madison Square Garden against William Joppy, a middleweight titlist enjoying his second reign as WBA champion, Trinidad scored a fifth-round stoppage, and his Puerto Rican fans made the venerable old cylinder tremble with delight.

"Trinidad at the Garden was like The Beatles at Shea Stadium," said writer Thomas Hauser, recalling the mania that engulfed the first of his final three fights in New York City.

Four days before Trinidad's Sept. 15, 2001, middleweight title-unification match with American Bernard Hopkins at Madison Square Garden, two passenger jets crashed into the Twin Towers in downtown Manhattan. The Trinidad-Hopkins fight was postponed two weeks. Hopkins returned immediately to his native Philadelphia. Trinidad remained in New York.

'ONE OF THE GREATEST FIGHTS OF ALL TIME BETWEEN TWO VERY TALENTED, UNDEFEATED KIDS. [TITO] DUG DOWN DEEP ... AND SO DID VARGAS. BUT IN THE END, TITO TOOK VARGAS APART.'
– BOBBY GOODMAN

The night they fought, Hopkins neutralized Trinidad, using balance and timing to take the ferocity from Trinidad's left hook, countering him repeatedly with short right crosses that struck flusher the later the fight went. One minute into the final round, Hopkins dropped Trinidad, and Felix Sr. climbed in the ring, strode across the canvas and removed his son's white mouth guard and any possibility the match might continue.

"In seeing the way they would bring Tito to his peak during fight week, I can't help but wonder if it might have been different if 9/11 didn't postpone the fight," said Hopper. "Tito has a very big heart, and he stayed in New York. Don took him down to the food lines, to feed the workers, and I believe that he was tremendously affected by what he saw.

"I'm not taking anything away from Bernard, because that was the performance of his career. But I really wonder."

"Tito had a great natural instinct," said Goodman. "As we got closer to a fight, he got snappy, and I would be worried if he didn't get that way. The one exception we did have was going into the Hopkins fight. We were at Ground Zero, not far from it. His gym was there, too, and we had to find another place to train. When 9/11 happened, it threw him off his game.

"But Hopkins was a very, very smart fighter, and styles make fights. He had the kind of style to frustrate Trinidad."

Despite later, high-paying events with Mayorga, Wright and Jones, the serious portion of Trinidad's career ended in Madison Square Garden on Sept. 29, 2001.

On Sunday, June 8, Felix "Tito" Trinidad, his father and what promises to be a cadre of Puerto Rican aficionados, will fill Canastota, N.Y., and pay homage once more to a man whose importance to his island and boxing cannot be overstated.

As Goodman puts it, "Tito came to the sport when it needed a hero."

THE SOUL OF A FIGHTER

SOCCER PLAYER-TURNED-BOXER **CURTIS WOODHOUSE** DEMONSTRATES THAT ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE IF YOU AIM HIGH

By **Gareth A Davies**

Remember Curtis Woodhouse, the professional boxer who delighted the world by tantalizingly finding out the home address of an abusive Twitter troll?

Woodhouse drove across England to his home, tweeting pictures of road signs as he got nearer on the roughly 50-mile drive. The final picture was of the placard of the puerile abuser's street.

By then, the troll was begging for mercy. He was apologetic, fearful and humbled. Woodhouse reassured me afterward that he would never have actually hurt the coward.

But it was the same drive and desire that saw Woodhouse forsake the comfort and riches of being a professional footballer (soccer player) at the age of 26, eight years ago, having been close to a $2 million transfer player at the top level of the English game. That means fame and fortune. But he gave it all up for fighting.

It's just in him, he told me. Woodhouse has the honesty of spit and sawdust coursing through him.

"I did it because I just loved to fight. I had to find out what it was to be a boxer," he told me for THE RING.

Fulfillment has been reached – for now. On Feb. 22, as a 6-1 underdog against Darren Hamilton, the man ranked below Amir Khan as the No. 2 junior welterweight in the country, Woodhouse won the British title by split decision in a brilliant fight.

"Back in 2006 – if I'm being perfectly honest – I never thought I'd get there, but it's like what they say, 'Shoot for the moon and you might just get to the stars,' so the British title was me shooting for the moon," Woodhouse said. "I thought if I

could win an area title, fantastic, so to actually win the British title, even weeks later it all seems a bit surreal."

"I keep looking at the belt, checking the belt to see if I've still got it. The reception I've had, the response from people is incredible. My name's in that category with some of the fighters I loved growing up. Some great fighters that have won the British title, my name's now one of them. What I've done they can never take away from me, so it makes me feel really proud of what I've achieved."

"I think my story's more one of perseverance than anything else, because I've had knockbacks. But because I had no amateur experience to start with, I knew I'd lose some along the way."

Woodhouse actually "retired" after winning the British title but then announced he was coming back.

"I realized I'm still an improving fighter," he said. "People can't know my level because I don't know my level. I'm still evolving. I haven't reached it yet, and in my last fight it was the best they'd ever seen me fight.

"People always say, 'Why do you do it?' And I've got to be honest. I know it sounds brutal, but I just love fighting. I enjoy it. When there's a fight happening, I want to be smack bang in the middle of it. I'm not one of them that likes to watch from a distance if there's a fight going off. Get me in the middle. ...

"I wake up every morning, I can't wait to go to the gym. My coach has to tell me to stop sparring because I just want to get in, don't even want to warm up. I hate wearing headguards. I just get the gloves on, and let's have a fight. That's my thing. I enjoy it. I love what I'm doing. That's probably what helps me learn, because if you enjoy something, you tend to learn a little bit quicker."

Woodhouse said football was killing him even though it gave him a fat bank balance.

"Emotionally and mentally, I didn't want to be there," he said. "I hated every moment of my life. Can money subsidize the way you're feeling, make you happy? Not for me. I was earning a lot. I got paid every week, and it was impossible to spend the money you were earning. You bought everything you needed. ... But I hated my job. I hated getting up in the morning to go to work."

He first started "hating" football as a Premiership footballer with Birmingham City. And after several clubs, and after playing 400 league matches, Woodhouse hung up his boots. He picked up gloves instead.

"I knew in my heart that I loved boxing," he said. "I used to watch it with my dad, I used to watch the Mike Tyson fights, Nigel Benn, Chris Eubank. I can't explain how it used to make me feel. I'd stare at the TV – open-eyed – and really look up to these guys as kind of superheroes.

"I've got copies of THE RING Magazine going back to 1950, something that my dad had, and he passed them on to me when he passed away. It's something that's been in my family. We're all boxing mad. I really looked up to these guys as something special, so that's the seed that was planted. I enjoyed fighting since I was 10 years old. Honestly, that's the truth."

There have been tough times over the last eight years,

U.K. TOP 10

1. **CARL FROCH**
2. **AMIR KHAN**
3. **KELL BROOK**
4. **CARL FRAMPTON**
5. **GEORGE GROVES**
6. **TYSON FURY**
7. **SCOTT QUIGG**
8. **MARTIN MURRAY**
9. **JAMES DEGALE**
10. **NATHAN CLEVERLY**

Five more (in alphabetical order): Paul Butler, Billy Joe Saunders, Stuey Hall, Ricky Burns, Jamie McDonnell.

Through fights of March 16

however. Not just financially, he explained, but psychologically.

"I came from one sport where I was universally accepted as a good player to go to another sport where I was universally accepted as rubbish," he said. "I used to go in to the gym, and people used to snigger. ... I could hear people whispering 'that's that footballer' when I used to get in to spar. They used to be coming round the corner to come and have a round with me, so they could all beat me up. There used to be 10 people waiting to spar, so they could go home and tell their mates, 'Hey, I've just battered Curtis Woodhouse.

"Believe me, one day, they will say that about the Curtis Woodhouse who goes on to win a world title."

The ambition still burns in the 33-year-old, who has a record of 22-6 (13 knockouts).

Said Woodhouse: "Now I've won the British title; I've done what I wanted to do. I've kind of put a line under that, and the next step is a crack at the European title. Then, who knows ... ? If I reach for the moon."

PAUL BUTLER

★ Unbeaten in fifteen career fights, Paul Butler looks to be a real talent. I've flagged him in "Letters from Europe" in the past, but he looked great in his last outing, having stepped up to bantamweight. The 25-year-old came out physically robust and skilled against Oreste Nieva of Argentina on March 8, earning a fourth-round stoppage.

There were comparisons with the young Ricky Hatton in his style and his ability to bustle into opponents, unleash combinations and come in and out quickly. They are certainly qualities which will serve him well in the 118-pound division. And with bantamweights such as IBF titleholder Stuey Hall (who was due to defend against Martin Ward on March 29) and former champion Jamie McDonnell on these shores, there are great matchups ahead.

RICKY BURNS

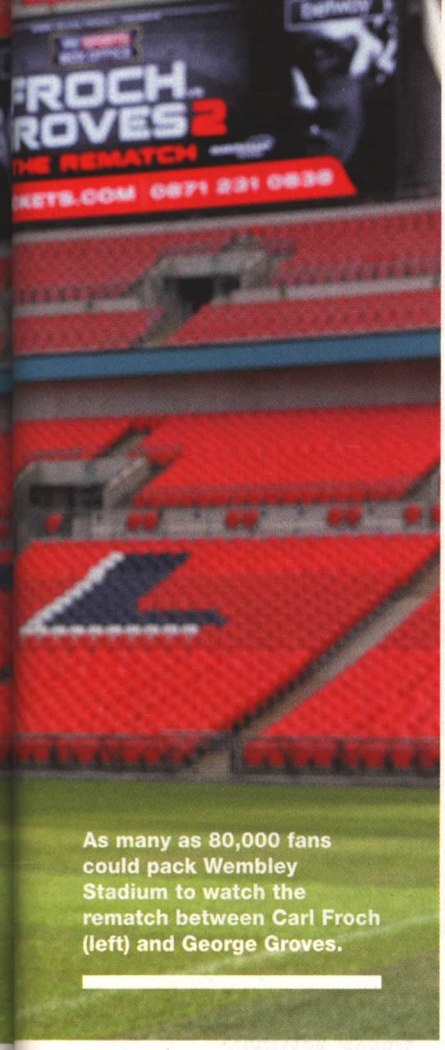
★ Ricky Burns must go back to the drawing board after a boxing lesson from Terence Crawford on March 1 in Glasgow, Scotland. Burns was outclassed by the technical savvy of the southpaw. After two rounds of feeling out, Crawford stylishly forced the Scotsman to relinquish the WBO lightweight title in his fifth defense.

The result was never in doubt, Crawford arguably winning the remaining rounds apart from the 10th. Burns called immediately for a rematch, but then admitted that he had faced "the toughest, trickiest" fighter in the lightweight division.

Crawford has some way to go, but he clearly has the desired gifts, without the power. At 26 and now unbeaten in 23 contests, he may become a player under Top Rank promoter Bob Arum.

Long, lean, and inventive, the Nebraskan was too quick and too slick for the hometown hero. Time and again, the American avoided the champion's driving advances and countered effectively. What never left Burns was his durability, pride and grittiness, but that alone was not sufficient to prevent the third defeat in his 40-fight career.

Eddie Hearn, Burns' promoter, believes there are fights for his man both domestically and abroad at world level.



As many as 80,000 fans could pack Wembley Stadium to watch the rematch between Carl Froch (left) and George Groves.

FROCH-GROVES

★ Carl Froch vs. George Groves has caught fire in the U.K. And Wembley Stadium, England's national football stadium, could not be a more fitting venue for the rematch on May 31.

Promoter Eddie Hearn believes that it could become the biggest fight in U.K. history; a crowd of 80,000 would outstrip all stadium attendance records.

In July 1933, roughly 70,000 spectators watched Irishman Jack "Gorgeous Gael" Doyle fight the Welshman Jack Petersen at White City, the 1908 Olympic Stadium, for the British heavyweight title.

Doyle, 19 years old and standing 6 feet 5 inches, had, by some accounts, done most of his warming up in a pub not far from the bout. He knew he was in trouble within the opening seconds and decided to take the easy way out. He was disqualified for repeatedly punching low.

My understanding is that remains the biggest crowd attendance at any fight in this country.

Post-war, the biggest British gates in the sport are the megafight between Joe Calzaghe and Mikkel Kessler at the Millennium Stadium in 2007 – which was for two super middleweight belts – and which drew over 50,000 spectators, and Ricky Hatton's homecoming fight against Juan Lazcano at the City of Manchester Stadium in 2008, which drew more than 55,000.

Other fights at Wembley Stadium have also drawn large audiences. In 1986, Frank Bruno vs. Tim Witherspoon drew 40,000 in the early hours of the morning. In 1963, Cassius Clay against Henry Cooper, also at Wembley, had an audience about 25,000, which included a newly married Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor in the plush seats.

Given the complexities of transport and council requirements, the Froch-Groves fight will likely start at 10 p.m. local time. Grudge-fight rematches, especially following an inconclusive or controversial ending, have always grown exponentially at the box office. Think Mike Tyson-Evander Holyfield or Holyfield-Lennox Lewis.

But given the hype around this as two British super middleweights – the young pretender Groves with an air of arrogance, and seasoned world champion Froch – the parallels with two warriors from 20 years ago, Nigel Benn and Chris Eubank, can be drawn.

There was no love lost after the first fight, won by Eubank, and they fought to a draw in October 1993 in front of 42,000 fans at Old Trafford in Manchester, for the WBO and WBC super middleweight crowns.

FURY-CHISORA

★ Froch-Groves II will be followed in July by Tyson Fury-Dereck Chisora II, another fight which will ignite and draw a large audience. BoxNation, Frank Warren's television station, will air the contest, which will be for both the European heavyweight crown and act as an eliminator for the WBO heavyweight title.

Fury revealed he will box "12 rounds behind closed doors," most likely against Carlos Takam, in mid-April. It's not unusual, of course. Muhammad Ali did the same 24 hours before fighting Joe Bugner in Kuala Lumpur in 1975.

Ali went 15 rounds with sparring partners on the day of the weigh-in. After the fight, so the story goes (via Colin Hart, International Boxing Hall of Fame writer), Bugner was swimming laps in the hotel pool, drinking a glass of champagne after each length. Ali was up in his room, unable to move, exhausted.

Fury, of course, will have three months to recover from his closed-door sparring session before stepping into the ring for the most important fight of his career, against Chisora.

BoxNation has lined up some major contests to air in the next few months in the U.K., including the Floyd Mayweather Jr.- Marcos Maidana fight on May 3. RING

Gareth A Davies is Boxing Correspondent for *The Telegraph*, London.

BEST OF DOUGIE'S MAILBAG

RINGTV.COM EDITOR'S POPULAR COLUMN NOW APPEARS IN THE RING MAGAZINE

By **Doug Fischer**

Since 2001, RingTV.com Editor Doug Fischer has held an ongoing dialog – which occasionally becomes heated debate – with boxing fans from around the world in "Dougie's Mailbag."

Beginning this year, the editors of THE RING are periodically compiling excerpts from Fischer's online column from previous months to appear in the printed edition. The following excerpts are from the March 10, 14 and 17 editions of the Monday and Friday mailbags.

JOSE MARTINEZ, of Michigan, thought Mauricio Herrera was the clear winner in his challenge to RING junior welterweight champ Danny Garcia, who won a controversial majority decision on March 15 in the friendly confines of Puerto Rico. Martinez, who scored the fight 117-111 for Herrera, asked Fischer whether he gave the tough and crafty Southern Californian too much credit.

I think you may have given the underdog the benefit of the doubt in one or two rounds, but I agree with your opinion that Herrera did enough to earn the victory. I scored the fight for Herrera 116-112 (or eight rounds to four). I only scored Rounds 1, 4, 10 and 11 for Garcia.

Herrera out-jabbed and outworked Garcia, plus he walked the champ down for most of the fight. I thought the challenger was in command during the majority of rounds. However, there were some close rounds that could have gone to Garcia, the naturally harder hitter who connected with more power punches. From ringside, my guess is that Garcia's counter potshots and hook-cross combos carried more weight with the judges and some members of the press than Herrera's less powerful jabs and crosses. Tim Smith, who covered the fight from ringside for RingTV.com, scored the fight a draw 114-114. RingTV.com's staff writer Lem Satterfield, who did the live round by round for the site (from TV), scored the fight for Garcia 115-113.

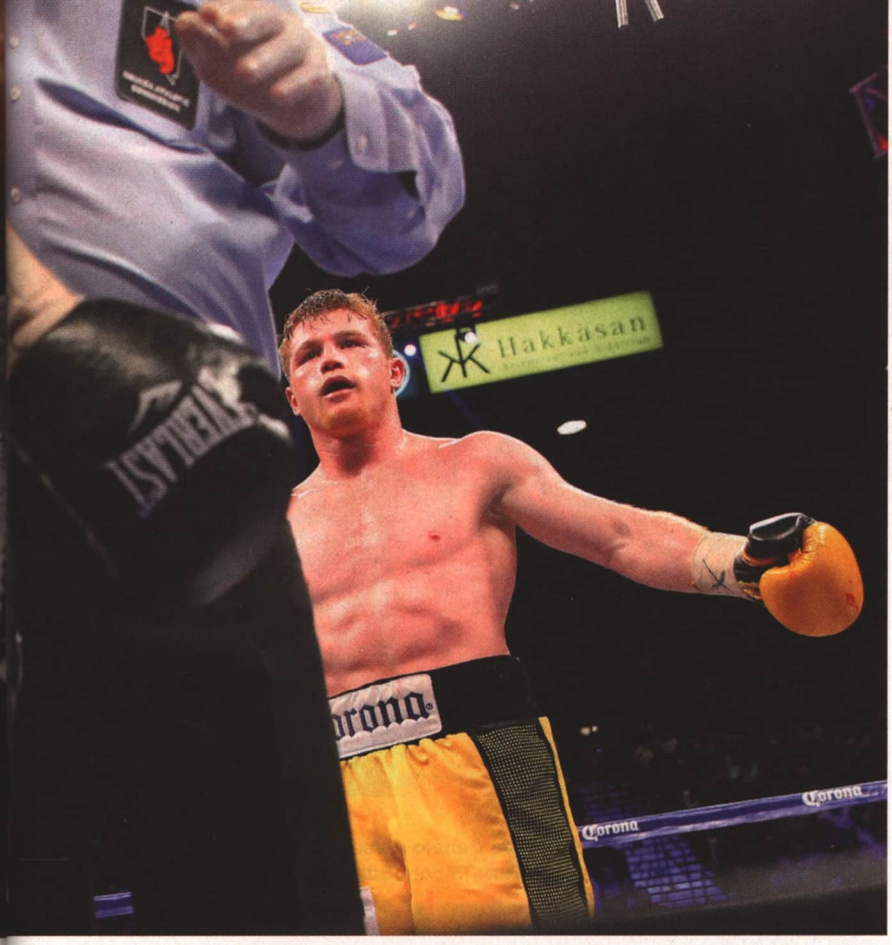
ORION KNEPP, a young amateur boxer from San Francisco, was concerned about the immediate fan outrage following referee Tony Weeks' decision to stop the Canelo Alvarez-Alfredo Angulo fight in Round 10 in order to spare Angulo punishment. He thought it was a good stoppage and hoped that Fischer agreed and had received other emails that supported Weeks' decision.

I haven't checked all of my inboxes (I've got three of 'em) but, so far, I haven't received any emails from fans who were against the stoppage.

Maybe that's because Angulo's fans were too hung over to write anything up on Sunday (they were hitting the cervezas at the MGM Grand harder than Canelo was teeing off on their boy). But if they woke up with hangover headaches, I guarantee you the pain they felt was nothing compared to what Angulo was feeling.

There's no doubt in my mind that Weeks did the right thing by stopping it when he did.

I totally understand the frustration that Angulo's fans felt at the moment of the stoppage. Their guy had gone through hell in order to catch Alvarez against the ropes when the redheaded star eventually got tired, which hap-



An intervention by referee Tony Weeks eventually ended the fight between Canelo Alvarez (arms outstretched) and Alfredo Angulo.

pened in Rounds 7 and 8. They saw a glimmer of hope when Alvarez elected to stand and trade during the final minute of the eighth. It only takes one good shot to turn a fight or knock a guy out cold. (But that same rule applies for their guy.)

I also understand trainer Virgil Hunter's frustration with the stoppage. On the same card we all witnessed three fighters take an amount of punishment that was close to or equal to what Angulo absorbed and those fights were not stopped. Ricardo Alvarez, Nihito Arakawa and Cristian Mijares were all hopelessly outgunned by their opponents (Sergio Thompson, Jorge Linares and Leo Santa Cruz), and unlike Angulo, they didn't have the punching power to turn the fight or stage a dramatic comeback.

But Weeks, who refereed one of the most brutal fights in history (Diego Corrales-Jose Luis Castillo I) and one fight that ended in a fatality (Leavander Johnson-Jesus Chavez), isn't supposed to concern himself with what happened in other fights or with the possibility of an Angulo rally. His only concern is the fighter's safety. Weeks took into consideration the accumulation of blows that Angulo took and the way Round 9 and first 40 seconds of Round 10 went (target practice for Canelo) and he made a decision.

I can certainly live with it, and more importantly Angulo is still with us – healthy and alert – to live with it.

BRANDON BAKER presented Fischer with four mythical matchups: a prime Sugar Shane Mosley vs. Floyd Mayweather Jr., Sonny Liston vs. Rocky Marciano, Jake Lamotta vs. Marvin Hagler and Manny Pacquiao vs. Julio Cesar Chavez Sr.

A prime Sugar Shane Mosley vs. Floyd Mayweather Jr. – When this fight was first talked about in the late 1990s ('98-99), back when Floyd had the WBC 130-pound belt and Shane held the IBF 135-pound strap, I favored Mayweather (believe it or not). I knew that Mosley had to seriously drain himself to make the lightweight limit, and if he couldn't whack Mayweather out early, I thought he'd fade over the second half of the fight. Also, Mayweather's classic stand-up one-two combo boxing style always troubled Mosley. A stiff, educated jab disrupted Mosley's rhythm. Still, it would have been a tough fight for Mayweather due to Shane's speed, power, physical strength and activity. If they fought at lightweight, I like Mayweather by a close decision. If they fought at welterweight, when Mosley first moved up to 147 (late 1999-through-2000, when he still had his lightweight speed and activity, plus the sharper technique he used to exhibit), I think Sugar Shane would have caught Mayweather and taken him out. But Mayweather would have always presented a tough style for Mosley, and Floyd always knew it. I witnessed Mayweather aggressively call Shane out backstage at the old Joint (inside the Hard Rock Hotel in Las Vegas) after Mosley knocked out Willy Wise on HBO.

Sonny Liston vs. Rocky Marciano – Liston was too big, too tough and too well schooled for Rocky's iron will and relentless attack to overcome. I think Liston would have chopped Marciano

BEST OF DOUGIE'S MAILBAG

Erislandy Lara (pictured) would give Canelo Alvarez a tougher challenge than Alfredo Angulo did, according to RingTV.com Editor Doug Fischer.

up to a late-rounds stoppage.

Jake LaMotta vs. Marvin Hagler – LaMotta is an underrated boxer. The movie *Raging Bull* portrayed him as an ultra-aggressive slugger, but he was just as skilled and crafty as he was tough and ballsy. LaMotta also had the experience from sharing the ring with better boxers than 90 percent of the boxers Hagler faced (such as boxing's G.O.A.T. Sugar Ray Robinson, Hall of Famers Marcel Cerdan, Holman Williams and Lloyd Marshall, and excellent contenders of the 1940s such as Tommy Bell, Jose Basora, George Costner and Jackie Wilson). I think LaMotta would mix in the right amount of boxing and brawling to win a close but unanimous decision.

Manny Pacquiao vs. Julio Cesar Chavez Sr. – Pacquiao's style would have been very difficult for JC Superstar but at 130-140 pounds I think the Mexican icon would have weathered the early storm and gradually cut the ring off on the Filipino hero until he was able to dish out some serious late rounds punishment (especially to the body) en route to a close decision or late stoppage. Above 140 pounds, I would go with Pacquiao by decision if we're talking about the 2009-2010 version of the PacMan.

BILAL MAHMOUD, from London, asked Fischer what's next for Angulo and who would win if Alvarez were to fight fellow 154-pound contender Erislandy Lara?

I think Canelo can beat Lara, but he won't do the same things that Angulo did to the Cuban southpaw. Styles make fights. Angulo's pressure-fighting style forced Lara (who was content to back up while busting up "El Perro's" face) to the ropes, where he was able to do most of his damage. Canelo didn't back up against Angulo, who wasn't strong enough to force the kid back (at least in the early rounds) and wasn't fast or elusive enough to protect himself from Alvarez's "cinna-bombs."

Canelo-Lara would be more tit-for-tat from a distance, which favors Lara in many ways. However, Canelo has the sharper jab, the better combinations and the heavier shots on average, so I can see him winning close rounds even when he lets his hands go only in spots (much the way he did against Austin Trout). Lara would be the ring general, though, and would probably land the harder single shots (with his left) from the outside.

What's next for Angulo? Hopefully, a long rest. He needs it. If he stays at 154 pounds (I think he needs to be up at middleweight), I think the smartest thing would be to put him in with a journeyman just for the confidence builder and then move on to solid name fighters who are either past their primes like Shane Mosley (if Sugar Shane is still willing to lace 'em on – and you know he would be for "El Perro") or Cornelius "K9" Bundrage (Dog vs. Dog), or go for young guns who have built-up records, such as the U.K.'s Brian Rose or Texas' Charles Hatley.

If he can win those fights, I'd try to maneuver him to a title shot against IBF beltholder Carlos Molina, who could face deportation over recent legal problems. They can fight in Mexico. Sure, Molina will probably stick it out and win, but at least Angulo won't absorb another awful beating.

I would definitely steer Angulo clear of a James Kirkland rematch, the Charlo Twins and WBO boss Demetrius Andrade.

Shields has the background and charisma to inspire others if given the chance.

GOLD OF LITTLE VALUE

CLARESSA SHIELDS HAS LARGELY BEEN OVERLOOKED IN SPITE OF HER OLYMPIC TRIUMPH

By **Thomas Gerbasi**

A conversation with women's boxing great Lucia Rijker for last month's RING column turned to the state of the game for the ladies. And immediately she brought up the plight of 2012 U.S. Olympic gold medalist Claressa Shields.

"She was like Mike Tyson," Rijker said excitedly. "When I saw her fight, I was afraid for her opponent. And I know she hurt people. Then I came home and there were no newspapers and magazines with stories about her. I thought I lived in America. I thought sports and females were honored in America."

Some are. Tennis or soccer players, gymnasts or track and field stars, for example. But if you're a boxer, evidently, you're more likely to remain anonymous.

"In other countries they value their female fighters," said Shields. "But here they don't."

There was a time when an Olympic gold medal guaranteed a boxer a certain level of security. But the days of a Sugar Ray

Leonard or Oscar De La Hoya leaving the amateur ranks and picking up a lucrative pro contract or endorsement deal apparently are over.

"I think boxing, in general, doesn't get that type of push," said Shields' agent, Rick Mirigian, who also represents 2012 Olympian and Top Rank signee Jose Ramirez. "If you look at the men's world, you don't see very many high-profile endorsements or commercial media with boxers. I think it's extremely tough to sell a boxer to mainstream America, and very few have transcended those barriers."

Several members of the men's Class of 2012 have been signed by powerful manager Al Haymon, and others have picked up deals as well. However, Shields, the first woman from

Is Claressa Shields the victim of apathy toward women boxers in the U.S.?

the United States to win boxing gold, feels she has no choice but to stick around for the 2016 Games in hopes of becoming the first American boxer – male or female – to win two Olympic gold medals.

"Then they'd have to respect me because nobody in America has ever won two boxing Olympic gold medals," she said.

Shields' future shouldn't hinge on another medal. The 19-year-old is the type of fighter we should be celebrating. A native of Flint, Mich., the same hardscrabble town that produced Chris Byrd and the Dirrell brothers, Shields began boxing at

'SHE'S THE DEFINITION OF A STRONG WOMAN, MENTALLY, PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY.'
– RICK MIRIGIAN

11. She used the gym as a way to escape her difficult environment but also discovered that she could fight. After winning a variety of national and international titles, she took Olympic gold in the middleweight division in London.

Still, no A-list endorsements or promotional contracts came her way. The likeable Shields isn't bitter, though.

"I didn't get as much attention as a man would have gotten if he would have won, or as much attention as [teammate] Marlen Esparza got coming up to the Olympics. But without the Gold medal in my life, I wouldn't be where I'm at right now," she said. "I would still be that girl nobody knew about. But now I get calls all the time for interviews and from people who want me to come and talk to kids at schools and churches. And my agent has been working on some things, so it was definitely something positive for me."

Esparza, who won a Bronze medal in London, has a CoverGirl endorsement deal and a fitness DVD, has appeared in *ESPN The Magazine*'s "Body Issue," and has nearly 46,000 Twitter followers (compared to almost 7,000 for Shields). In short, she fits the Golden Girl mold without the medal to go with it. Shields, a tough, inner-city kid who came up the hard way and fights with a ferocity mainstream America might not be ready for from its teenage girls, doesn't fit that mold.

And that's unfortunate, because with her compelling backstory, personal charm, and charisma in and out of the ring, she's not just a young lady who deserves that spotlight but one who is capable of inspiring others in the process.

Mirigian immediately saw in Shields the aforementioned qualities. He believes the world will soon be on board – better late than never.

"I saw someone that deserved so much more than what they were getting," he said. "Her life story is incredible. It's the American Dream, and she's the definition of a strong woman, mentally, physically and emotionally. She is a piece of history we're watching evolve in front of us."

As for Shields, she's just getting started.

"People say, 'Oh, you're like a *Million Dollar Baby* fighter," she said. "My goal is to be a billion-dollar baby fighter. (Laughs.) I want to be that good. I have to be 10 times better than the guys if they're going to put me on TV, so I've got a lot of work to do." RING

POUND FOR POUND

1. CECILIA BRAEKHUS, Norway
24-0 (7 KOs)
Welterweight

2. ANNE SOPHIE MATHIS, France
27-3 (23 KOs)
Junior middleweight

3. JELENA MRDJENOVICH, Canada
32-9-1 (16 KOS)
Featherweight

4. AVA KNIGHT, U.S.
12-2-3 (5 KOs)
Junior flyweight

5. YESICA YOLANDA BOPP, Argentina
26-1 (12 KOs),
Junior flyweight

6. ERICA ANABELLA FARIAS, Argentina
19-0 (9 KOs)
Lightweight

7. JESSICA CHAVEZ, Mexico
19-3-3 (4 KOs)
Junior flyweight

8. MELISSA HERNANDEZ, U.S.
19-5-3 (6 KOs)
Featherweight

9. DIANA PRAZAK, Australia
13-2 (9 KOs)
Junior lightweight

10. MARCELA ELIANA ACUNA, Argentina
40-6-1 (17 KOs)
Junior featherweight

Through fights of March 16

ERROL SPENCE

By **Mike Coppinger**

THE ESSENTIALS

Age: 24
Weight class: welterweight
Height: 5 feet 10 inches
Stance: Southpaw
Hometown: DeSoto, Texas
Record: 11-0 (9 knockouts)
Biggest strengths: Composure ★ amateur pedigree ★ athleticism.
Biggest question marks: Tends to rush in ★ needs to set up punches more ★ doesn't always work behind a jab.

2012 Olympian Errol Spence reminds his handlers of a boxing legend.

The closest thing to a southpaw version of Sugar Ray Leonard? That's what Golden Boy Promotions matchmaker Eric Gomez believes he has in Errol Spence.

Gomez is convinced that the 2012 U.S. Olympian from Texas has a similar blend of speed, power and ring generalship to that of the gold medalist from 1976 who went on to have a Hall of Fame career.

And although Spence has only 11 fights, a welterweight title shot could come as early as late this year, Gomez said.

Spence has yet to face an elite opponent as a pro, but he has sparred with many top 147-pounders. That includes Adrien Broner, Lamont Peterson, Shawn Porter and Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Spence said he held his own during the sessions, which gives him ammunition as he inches toward a world title shot.

"It shows me that I have the skills to fight with these dudes and fight at their level," he said.

Spence has cruised through his fights so far, showing composure well beyond his years. Perhaps his calm demeanor in the ring comes from his longtime trainer, Derrick James, who fought as a cruiserweight from 1992 to 2007.

"He understands weight problems, he understands the boxer's perspective," Spence said. " ... It's great having a coach that used to box before. He has a lot of experience, and he knows the stuff that I go through."

Showtime analyst Steve Farhood called the action for Spence's pro debut and loved what he saw. ShoBox polled 2012 U.S. Olympians that night on which team member was most likely to succeed. The winner? Spence. Farhood believes the team got it right.

"Spence is a slick, but aggressive lefty who instantly understood the value of body punching in the professional game," Farhood said. "He is very relaxed in the ring, and his maturity is apparent. ... I think enough of him to say this: Anything short of a world title would be a disappointment."

Spence didn't get into boxing until age 15 but quickly became a standout amateur, competing in several international tournaments on his way to the 2012 Olympics in London.

That's where he got a taste of what he might encounter as a pro: He was robbed in a second-round fight against Krishan Vikas, of India. The decision was overturned, but Spence lost in the quarterfinals and didn't medal.

He did, however, come away with valuable experience.

"Fighting in that atmosphere ... that's the biggest stage in the world," he said. "Fighting in front of all the people and cameras, in front of family, you know, that's a lot of pressure. ... It helped me a lot for the pro game."

Texas has hosted many high-profile fights the past few years, mostly in San Antonio. Spence's dream is to headline a major card in Dallas, which isn't far from his hometown of DeSoto.

First things first, though. Spence needs that world title. And as he prepares for bigger and better fights, he remembers the advice Mayweather gave him after their sparring session: "Stay focused 24/7 ... don't get caught up in guys talking outside the ring."

If he can heed those wise words, perhaps he can realize the potential Golden Boy Promotions and others believe he has. RING

3 MORE TO WATCH

ESQUIVA FALCAO
SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT (1-0, 1 KO)

The 2012 Olympic silver medalist from Brazil has fought only once but is on the fast track at age 24. He's promoted by Top Rank.

PRICHARD COLON
WELTERWEIGHT (8-0, 8 KOS)

The 21-year-old from Puerto Rico recently signed with powerful advisor Al Haymon and fought for the first time under his banner on the Danny Garcia-Mauricio Herrera undercard on March 15. Six of Colon's stoppages have come in the first round.

ALEJANDRO GONZALEZ JR.
BANTAMWEIGHT (22-0-2, 14 KOS)

He's just 21, but the Mexico native is advanced for his age. He's the son of the former featherweight titleholder and lightweight contender from the 1990s.

BRAIN TEASER

SOME SUPPORT AIBA'S DECISION TO ELIMINATE HEADGEAR FOR ELITE AMATEURS, SOME DON'T

By **Scott LaFee**

Amateur boxing officials insist elite amateurs will be safer *without* headgear.

Some three decades ago, spurred by concerns about brain injury risks and public calls for the sport to be banned, the International Boxing Association (AIBA) decreed that all amateur boxers would be required to wear protective headgear.

Last year AIBA dumped the rule, sort of. It declared that elite male boxers would no longer wear headgear, though amateur women, senior and youth boxers would still be required to do so. Thus, for the first time since the Moscow Games in 1980, male boxers at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics in 2016 will sport unencumbered noggins.

AIBA officials insist the boxers will be safer. Others aren't so sure.

Here's the argument, some of which sounds decidedly counterintuitive.

Without headgear, the thinking goes, boxers are obliged to fight smarter, acquiring or improving their defensive skills because they can no longer mistakenly rely upon headgear to protect them should they become overly aggressive or make mistakes.

Headgear obscures fighters' peripheral vision, rendering them more vulnerable to punches coming from the sides.

Headgear makes the wearer's head a larger target. It makes the head heavier and more difficult to move quickly. It entices opponents to focus on head shots, boosting the number of such blows in a bout.

Headgear can cause overheating, contribute to dehydration and, consequently, reduce mental clarity and the odds a boxer will make good choices in the heat of a bout.

Charles Butler, an AIBA executive and chair of its medical commission, says the adoption of headgear in 1982 was prompted by panic after the American Medical Association and other groups loudly called for a ban on amateur boxing.

Butler says there was no scientific evidence then – and there is none now – that proves headgear prevents traumatic brain injuries. Indeed, he argues that headgear simply diffuses the impact of blows, permitting

fighters to sustain more punches for a longer period and thus potentially suffer greater accumulated damage. Plus, he says, headgear provides no protection to the chin, a major point of vulnerability.

Butler buttresses these arguments with his own research. The retired cardiac surgeon cites collected data from almost 15,000 rounds of boxing: 7,352 rounds with boxers wearing headgear and 7,545 without. There was a .38 percent change of suffering a concussion – roughly one third of 1 percent – during a round of boxing with headgear, .17 without, based on Butler's survey sample.

And so AIBA officially concluded in a statement last year: "All available data indicated that the removal of headgear in elite men would result in a decreased number of concussions."

That's a determination not universally embraced. Skeptics note that Butler's research is unpublished. It has not been peer-reviewed or rigorously examined. They point as well to a multi-year Johns Hopkins University study in the 1980s and '90s that found boxers who used headgear exhibited fewer signs of cognitive impairment than boxers who fought without headgear.

And a 2012 paper published in the *Journal of Neurosurgery* reported that headgear measurably lessened the risk of injury from linear acceleration, albeit not from rotational forces, the kinds of blows that cause the head and neck to suddenly turn and twist.

No one argues that headgear prevents concussions. It's clear it does not. But headgear does significantly reduce the likelihood of facial cuts, particularly around the eyes. Dr. Robert Cantu, a neurosurgeon, ringside physician and author of *Concussions and Our Kids*, has argued that this fact alone makes headgear worth keeping at the amateur level.

Most health professionals seem to agree. Earlier this year, the Association of Ringside Physicians issued a statement that said, in part, "Amateur boxing is a relatively safe sport, and eliminating headgear will make amateur boxing less safe."

Dr. Joe Estwanik, president of the ringside physicians group, said his organization supports improving headgear technologies and other safety measures, not removing some measures in the purported name of safety. He notes the apparent illogic of arguing male boxers are safer without headgear, but women, seniors and youth boxers are not.

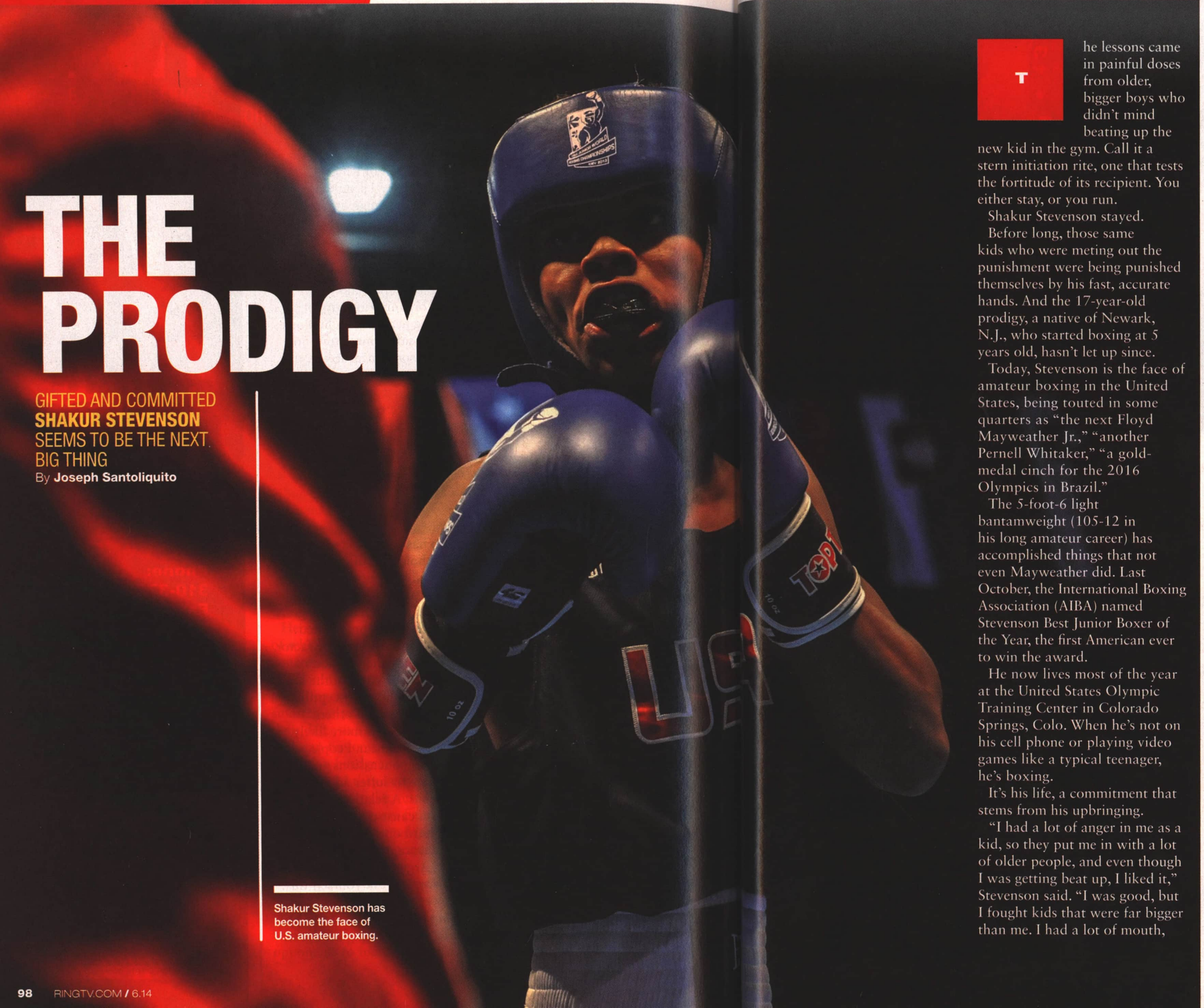
That rationale seems to rest on the notion that women, seniors and youth do not usually possess the strength to deliver a concussive blow. Conventional wisdom has long posited that the threshold for suffering a concussion is around 75gs – or 75 times the force of gravity – but lots of research now suggests it's a much more complicated picture. G-force is just one factor. Others include the location of the blow: Some parts of the head and brain are more susceptible to direct injury than others. Rotational force is more likely to injure than linear. People with a history of concussions are more prone to suffer additional concussions. A relatively light punch can cause a concussion while a hard one might not.

The science of headgear safety is scant. Arguments can be made either way. But ask yourself this: If you were an amateur fighter stepping into the ring, would you want to go in wearing headgear or not? RING

THE PRODIGY

GIFTED AND COMMITTED **SHAKUR STEVENSON** SEEMS TO BE THE NEXT BIG THING

By **Joseph Santoliquito**



Shakur Stevenson has become the face of U.S. amateur boxing.

The lessons came in painful doses from older, bigger boys who didn't mind beating up the new kid in the gym. Call it a stern initiation rite, one that tests the fortitude of its recipient. You either stay, or you run.

Shakur Stevenson stayed.

Before long, those same kids who were meting out the punishment were being punished themselves by his fast, accurate hands. And the 17-year-old prodigy, a native of Newark, N.J., who started boxing at 5 years old, hasn't let up since.

Today, Stevenson is the face of amateur boxing in the United States, being touted in some quarters as "the next Floyd Mayweather Jr.," "another Pernell Whitaker," "a gold-medal cinch for the 2016 Olympics in Brazil."

The 5-foot-6 light bantamweight (105-12 in his long amateur career) has accomplished things that not even Mayweather did. Last October, the International Boxing Association (AIBA) named Stevenson Best Junior Boxer of the Year, the first American ever to win the award.

He now lives most of the year at the United States Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo. When he's not on his cell phone or playing video games like a typical teenager, he's boxing.

It's his life, a commitment that stems from his upbringing.

"I had a lot of anger in me as a kid, so they put me in with a lot of older people, and even though I was getting beat up, I liked it," Stevenson said. "I was good, but I fought kids that were far bigger than me. I had a lot of mouth, and I wasn't scared. But yeah, I got hit. I came up in a pretty rough area of Newark, and it's an area where you learned how to survive. And since my mom had nine kids, it made things rougher. I'm the oldest of nine, and sometimes you have to be the man of the house."

That's the way Willie Moses, his coach and surrogate grandfather, treated him. Stevenson used to wonder why Moses was so rough on him, why he pushed him harder than everyone else. Moses, a New Jersey State Boxing Hall of Famer, did it to make a man of him. There were times when Shakur wouldn't see his mother until late at night because she worked two jobs.

And he did it because he saw something in the stripling that was different.

"I didn't want him to be like everybody else," Moses said. "I took care of him day in and day out, and when he was around 2 years old, he started punching. By the time he was 5, I was taking him to the gym. The kid is special. Shakur has done some things at the amateur level that Mayweather hasn't done. He's won almost every tournament that he's been in. He's undefeated internationally. Boxing is truly his passion."

Now he's "the next big thing," taking pictures with L.L. Cool J and Katie Couric. And Stevenson appears to be handling it well. For his age, he seems very grounded. He also seems genuinely committed to constant improvement.

"We know what's ahead and the pressure that's growing, but Shakur can take it," Moses said. "The aim is Brazil, and it's a gold medal. He has a lot of things going for himself; he's heading in a great direction." RING

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BY NORM FRAUENHEIM

Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. (left) eclipsed the controversy around last September's fight against Bryan Vera with a dominant win in the rematch.

JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ JR. UD 12 BRYAN VERA

Date: March 1
Site: Alamodome, San Antonio
Division: Super middleweight
Weights: Chavez 167.5 pounds; Vera 167.5
RING rating (going into the fight): Neither fighter rated
Network: HBO

★ Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. had a lot to prove. Still does. The real victory in his unanimous decision over Bryan Vera is that he did what was expected of him. He showed up in shape. He made weight. Imagine that. He then proceeded to methodically pound out a decision over Vera with inherited instincts that have been there in a teasing flash, yet never with the consistency that Mexico expects from its son with a legendary name.

Is the rematch victory over Vera a new beginning? A restoration of faith in Chavez?

Only time can provide an answer. A second fight with Vera was a mandatory exercise in the erratic process of trying to turn Chavez into a mature pro. It was more remedial than rematch. Chavez had to show that he can fulfill contract clauses and not rely on debatable scoring to beat a tough, yet overmatched foe. He did none of those things on Sept. 28. Back then, he paid a six-figure price for the right to weigh in at 173 pounds instead of 168. He was awarded a controversial decision. It was dismissed, booed by pundits and Chavez loyalists alike.

If it was a gift, it came wrapped in an urgent message that put Chavez on notice. He had to respond. If not, he was in danger of losing the built-in audience that follows him because of his dad. A sign of that peril was in the Alamodome crowd. It was announced at 7,323, or almost half the size of the crowd that showed up for his last San Antonio fight, in 2012.

"I made a better fight this time," Chavez (48-1-1, 32 KOs) told ringside media. "I proved to all the people I'm a better fighter than Bryan Vera."

Vera, yes. But the real question is whether Chavez is better than he has been. More to the point, perhaps, is whether he's good enough for a rematch with Sergio Martinez. Martinez, who faces Miguel Cotto on June 7, scored a unanimous decision over Chavez in 2012, but not before Chavez rocked Argentina's middleweight champion in a wild 12th round. Then it was announced Chavez had tested positive for marijuana, which resulted in a nine-month suspension.

"You said I was scared of Sergio Martinez, but now Sergio Martinez is scared of me," said Chavez, who buried Vera (23-8, 14 KOs) beneath an avalanche of overhand rights in scoring a 117-110, 117-110 and 114-113 victory. Vera accepted the defeat, yet was frustrated by a late decision to extend the fight from 10 rounds to 12.

"We trained for 10," said Vera, who said he learned it had been rescheduled for 12 just a few days before the bout. "It's always something when we come to these [bleeping] fights. But I'm a fighter. I always give people a great fight."

Chavez Jr. has also talked about fighting the feared Gennady Golovkin. But in March that possibility was on hold because after the death of his father, Golovkin withdrew from an April 26 bout with Andy Lee.

"If Sergio Martinez beats Cotto, we should do the rematch," said Chavez

Chavez says he's more responsible because he's a new dad. He says he's fighting for more than just himself. His daughter, Julia, was born three months before opening bell. The responsibility of having to care for a baby, he said, forced him to be more disciplined. Time to give up the slacker ways.

"This time, I prepared to fight round by round," said Chavez, whose Hall of Fame dad was at ringside as an analyst for Mexican television. "A week before, I was on weight and able to work. Losing weight wasn't an issue. It didn't take my strength away.

"This is a better version of myself, but I will give more for the people."

A grown-up Chavez is the version many people want to see. ★

ORLANDO SALIDO SD 12 VASYL LOMACHENKO

Date: March 1
Site: Alamodome, San Antonio
Division: Featherweight
Weights: Salido 128.25 pounds; Lomachenko 125.25
RING rating (going into the fight): Salido No. 2; Lomachenko not rated
Network: HBO

★ Vasyl Lomachenko was seeking to add a record to his stash of Olympic gold. Instead, he got a punishing lesson on just how different the pay-per-punch ranks are from the amateurs. Orlando Salido, a so-called gatekeeper, kept Lomachenko from claiming a world title in what was advertised as the Ukrainian's second pro bout. There's some debate about that. There's also some debate about Salido's tactics.

But there's no argument about where Lomachenko stands at this early stage in his pro career. When it comes to his pursuit of a world title, he's still on the outside looking in.

Salido's victory was called an upset, even though he has a history of knocking off big-name prospects. Remember Juan Manuel Lopez? It has taken a few years, but only now does it appear that Lopez is back on track with a stoppage of Daniel Ponce de Leon. Lopez's career languished after two losses to Salido, who is dangerous in part because he fights as if he has little to lose.

Salido even lost the World Boxing Organization's version of the featherweight championship because he was 2.25 pounds heavier than the 126 limit at the formal weigh-in. That left the title vacant, wide open for Lomachenko to claim it in what was reported to be record time, although the two-time Olympic gold medalist fought six times for money in the World Series of Boxing.

At opening bell, Salido was reported to be 11 pounds heavier than Lomachenko. After opening bell, that weight advantage might have been leverage in Salido's bruising body attack, one that included repeated low blows. In clinches, Salido pounded away at Lomachenko's thighs and hips. Nothing appeared to be out of bounds and, in the end, all of it worked for the aggressive Salido. Referee Laurence Cole told RingTV.com that he warned Salido twice. But Cole never penalized the Mexican, who was the winner on two scorecards, 116-112 and 115-113. The third card favored Lomachenko, 115-113.

"If Salido persisted, then he should have taken points away," Lomachenko promoter Bob Arum said. "Obviously I think that Salido is a pro, and, that if he had been warned a couple of times with the threat of taking points away, then I believe that he would have stopped throwing low blows."

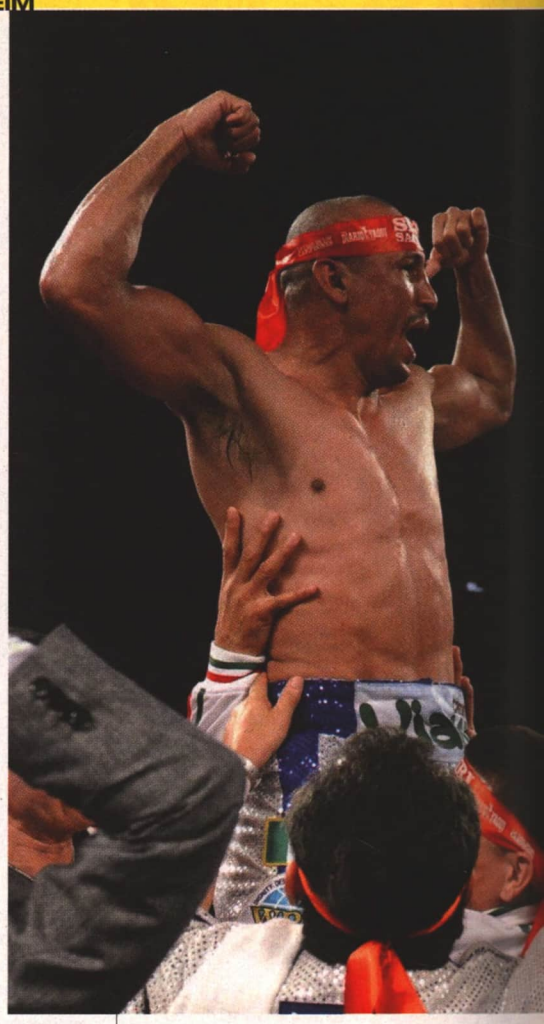
Lomachenko fought on without ever resorting to what is an unwritten rule in the pro game. To wit: If the ref doesn't intercede with a penalty, then it us up the fighter to ensure fairness by retaliating in kind. But Lomachenko never countered with a low blow of his own.

"I expected that," Lomachenko (1-1, 1 KO) told ringside media. "I'm a straight fighter. I'm clean. I would never fight dirty and throw punches below the belt. I have no excuses. He didn't make weight, but I thought I could still beat him."

The quicker Lomachenko almost did in the 12th and final round. A sudden succession of body shots put Salido in trouble. But Lomachenko couldn't finish a fighter who, first and foremost, is a survivor.

"I was hurt very badly in the 12th," Salido (41-12-2, 28 KOs) said. "He caught me with a very bad body shot. It was a matter of survival. It was preparation that got me through the round. I made sure he didn't land a liver punch."

Although Lomachenko failed in his bid for a major belt this time, a title is still the goal.



Orlando Salido (pictured) spoiled Vasyl Lomachenko's much-publicized bid for a world title.

"We hope we can fight for a title right away," Lomachenko manager Egas Klimas said.

A possibility is already on the table. The WBO announced that it would like to match its No. 1 contender, Gary Russell Jr., against Lomachenko for the vacant title. Both Arum and Golden Boy rival Richard Schaefer said they saw no problem with a purse bid for that fight.

But one loss will not stop Lomachenko from becoming a great pro, according to Klimas. Lomachenko is reported to have lost only once in 397 amateur fights.

"When he lost that one fight, he turned into a completely different fighter after," Klimas said. "I almost guarantee there is going to be only one loss in his professional career." ★

CANELO ALVAREZ TKO 10 ALFREDO ANGULO

Date: March 8
Site: MGM Grand, Las Vegas
Division: Junior middleweight
Weights: Alvarez 155 pounds; Angulo 154.5
RING rating (going into the fight): Alvarez No. 1; Angulo unrated
Network: Showtime (PPV)

★ A loss called a lesson by Canelo Alvarez led to a fight that would be a test of who he was, what he had learned and whether he was still as popular as ever.

Those questions, and a few more, were there in the wake of his dispiriting defeat to Floyd Mayweather Jr. in September. Alfredo Angulo and his stubborn, no-frills style was a blueprint for making Canelo look good. The matchmakers did their job. In the end, however, it was up to Canelo (43-1-1, 31 KOs) to make sure that he did exactly what Golden Boy Promotions intended. He did, with a thorough beatdown of Angulo (22-4, 18 KOs) in a performance that re-affirmed the hopes and much of the hype that have always been invested in the redheaded Mexican.

The fight ended in controversy. But don't blame Canelo for that. Referee Tony Weeks' stoppage at 47 seconds of the 10th round angered Angulo and brought booing and tossed debris from many in the MGM Grand crowd. Angulo complained that the stoppage denied him a chance at scoring a late-round knockout. That would have been his only chance. Canelo had an overwhelming lead on all three cards (89-82, 89-83, 88-83) in a bout the began with Angulo displaying none of the energy and power he had in knocking down Erislandy Lara twice. If Weeks wanted to deny Angulo anything, it was a further beating.

Canelo's powerful combinations had begun to elicit a punishing toll almost from the beginning. Bruises and blood began to appear near Angulo's eyes in the second. From round to round, swelling turned Angulo's face into an ugly mask. After the ninth, trainer Virgil Hunter could be heard telling Angulo that he was prepared to throw in the towel. Amid the noisy controversy at the moment of Weeks' stoppage, Hunter changed his tune, saying the fight should have continued.

But Weeks stood by his decision.

"At the end of the ninth round … Mr. Hunter approached me and told me that he was going to give Angulo one more round, and if [the beating] continued to happen, he was going to stop the fight," said Weeks. "While we were having our conversation, the doctor was evaluating Angulo. I approached the doctor, and the doctor informed me that he's taking too much punishment."

Weeks said he was told to end it if one more big punch landed.

"At the start of the 10th round, my mind was already made up," Weeks said. "I'm going to stop this fight. I'm just looking for the opportunity to do so. Canelo threw a flurry of punches, kind of landed a little bit. I kind of hesitated, didn't step in, because it wasn't really that devastating. Threw a couple more flurries, then that one hard uppercut that Angulo never really saw, or couldn't see, and his head went back in a violent way. A very demonstrative type way. His eyes rolled back, and that was it."

In breaking down Angulo, Alvarez showed that the Mayweather loss had done nothing to his poise and confidence. Both are still intact, as powerful and resilient as those well executed combos. More important, perhaps, was the news that his popularity was also still intact. The pay-per-view audience was announced at 350,000. That's a long way from Mayweather's record-setting numbers. But it represents a solid base from which to build Canelo into a reliable pay-per-view moneymaker.

"The fans have spoken," Golden Boy CEO Richard Schaefer said.

They have, which also means they are eager to know what's next for Canelo. Weight might be an issue. He couldn't make the 154-pound limit. He paid Angulo $100,000 out of his $1.25 million purse for the right to weigh in at 155. Angulo walked away with $850,000 to go with all of the bruises. Canelo looks to be moving toward middleweight, although his corner said he can still make 154 if a major title is at stake.

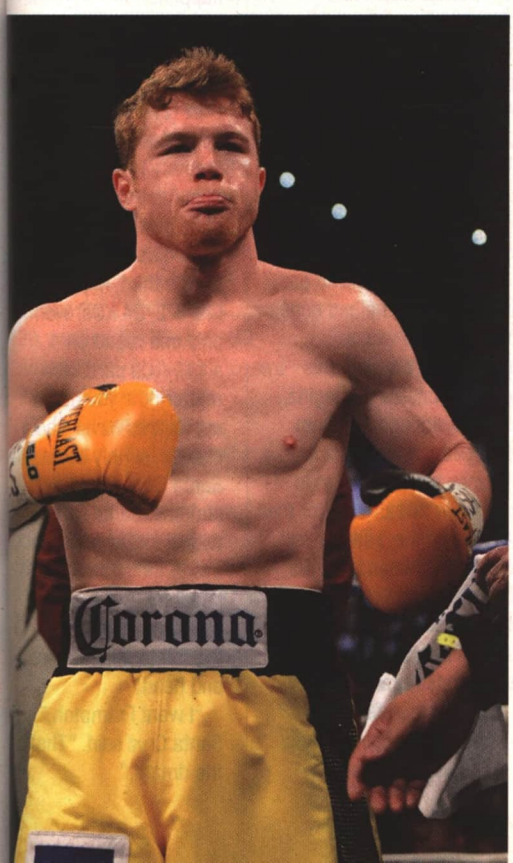
Whatever the weight, Canelo's next bout is expected to be on July 26, according to Schaefer. Lara is lobbying for a shot at him. In fact, Lara showed up at the news conference after Canelo took the bite out of Angulo, who calls himself "El Perro" (The Dog), yet was left with only a whine. Lara went to the podium, stood next to Canelo and asked when they could meet in a fight everybody wants to see.

"Everyone wants to see it?" Alvarez said. "Who wants to see it?'"

Lara manager Luis DeCubas Jr. raised his hand.

"Isn't that that your manager?" Alvarez asked Lara. "This is not how you make fights."

But it is a way to get people talking about one. ★



Canelo Alvarez (pictured) was anxious to get started in his fight against Alfredo Angulo.

NO. 1 MIGUEL VAZQUEZ UD 12 DENIS SHAFIKOV

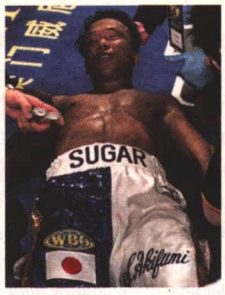
Feb. 22, Cotai Arena, Macau, China (HBO2)

★ Anonymity is Miguel Vazquez's biggest challenge. Everybody else doesn't have have much of a chance against the proficient technician from Mexico. At least, Denis Shafikov didn't.

Shafikov (33-1-1, 18 KOs) was overwhelmed on scorecards that didn't quite reflect his opponent's dominance. It was 115-113, 116-112, 119-109, all for Vazquez, who confused Shafikov with angles, footwork and a lot more in a skill set as complete as any. Vazquez (34-3, 13 KOs) lived up to his No. 1 rank among lightweights in delivering a thorough whipping to a fighter who had never been beaten.

But does anybody care?

Vazquez's greatest liability appears to be a lack of charisma. There are fights for him at 135 pounds. A bout with the emerging Terence Crawford is just one that might attract the kind of attention that so many get, yet don't deserve. All Vazquez does is win.



MARVIN SONSONA KO 3 AKIFUMI SHIMODA

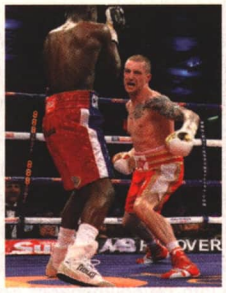
Feb. 22, Cotai Arena, Macau, China (HBO2)

★ An early contender for Knockout of the Year landed on the 2014 ballot at the very moment Akifumi Shimoda hit the canvas. The punch – a perfect uppercut – was delivered by Marvin Sonsona, a former junior bantamweight champion from the Philippines.

Whether the highlight-worthy KO at 1:17 of the third round gets any real consideration depends on what happens the rest of the year, but the punch might be enough to put Sonsona (18-1-1, 15 KOs) into the featherweight division's title mix.

The victory over Shimoda (28-4-2, 12 KOs), an ex-junior featherweight champion, was Sonsona's fourth straight since 2010, when Wilfredo Vazquez Jr. stopped him in four rounds.

"Marvin is still one of the three most popular fighters in his homeland, alongside Manny Pacquiao and Nonito Donaire. He had the problem that many big-name boxers run into: He surrounded himself with the wrong people and stopped taking his sport seriously," Lewkowicz said. "But he has matured so much since then, and completely rededicated himself."



NO. 8 TERENCE CRAWFORD UD 12 NO. 3 RICKY BURNS

March 1, Scottish Exhibition Centre, Glasgow, Scotland (Sky Sports)

★ Put Terence Crawford anywhere. Las Vegas or Scotland, Crawford manages to surprise, sometimes even himself

This time, he mostly surprised Ricky Burns and 10,000 Scots who were convinced that Crawford was there to be beaten. Through 12 rounds, nobody – not Burns, not the crowd and not the judges – could deny Crawford the WBO belt on the line.

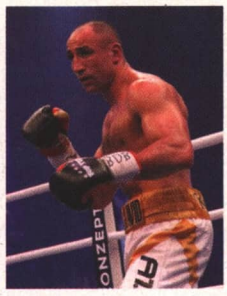
"I'm lost for words," Crawford (23-0, 16 KOs) told ringside media after his 116-112, 117-111, 116-112 victory.

That's the only thing Crawford was at a loss for in his first bout outside of the United States. The lightweight from Omaha, Neb., overwhelmed Burns with a variety of punches, including a left that cut Burns above his eye.

"He was tricky, very awkward," said Burns (36-3-1, 11 KOs), who was fighting with a titanium-augmented jaw fractured by Raymundo Beltran in a contentious draw last September. "I found it hard to get my shots off.

"But I'll be back."

So will Crawford.



NO. 5 ARTHUR ABRAHAM UD 12 NO. 3 ROBERT STIEGLITZ

March 1, GETEC Arena, Magdeburg, Germany

★ Anybody for a fourth fight? For Arthur Abraham and Robert Stieglitz, it appeared to be a very real possibility after the super middleweights concluded their trilogy in controversy.

Abraham won, but the scorecards were far from decisive. Two judges gave him the victory, scoring 114-111 and 115-110. But the third favored Stieglitz, 113-112.

"That was a real battle," said Abraham (39-4-0, 28 KOs). "Of course, I see myself as the winner. I won through my hard punches."

Those punches were hard enough to score a late 12th-round knockdown of Stieglitz (46-4, 26 KOs), who got up thinking he had done enough to win.

"I can't explain this decision," said Stieglitz, who stopped Abraham a year ago and lost a unanimous decision to him in 2012. "I led for the whole time. I see myself as the winner. I lost the last round. But not the fight. No way."

A fourth fight will have to wait. Abraham has signed to defend his WBO title against Nikola Sjekloca in Berlin.

NO. 2 LEO SANTA CRUZ UD NO. 7 CRISTIAN MIJARES

March 8, MGM Grand, Las Vegas (Showtime)

★ Leo Santa Cruz had heard the talk. And, yeah, he was intrigued by it. He has long wanted to face Northern Ireland's Carl Frampton in a junior featherweight showdown with Fight of the Year potential. But he also knew that Cristian Mijares could make a Frampton bout unlikely.

Santa Cruz, thorough and detail oriented, wasn't going to let that happen.

"Mijares is a great boxer," Santa Cruz said.

Maybe so, but Santa Cruz (27-0-1, 15 KOs) made him look ordinary in a decision so dominant it was often dull. It was a shutout on two cards, 120-108. On the third, Mijares (49-8-2, 24 KOs) won only one round on a 119-109 card. No matter how you add it up, Mijares never had a chance, simply because Santa Cruz didn't give him one. Santa Cruz was bloodied above an eye in the fourth by a headbutt. But not even the blood slowed his assault to Mijares' body and head.

"I want Frampton," Santa Cruz said. "That's the dream."

VYACHESLAV GLAZKOV UD 12 NO. 3 TOMASZ ADAMEK

March 15, Bethlehem, Pa. (NBC)

★ Vyacheslav Glazkov promised a fight that would honor fellow Ukrainians caught in the political turmoil over Russia's annexation of Crimea.

Glazkov, a 2008 Olympic bronze medalist, did not disappoint.

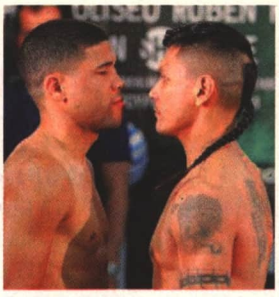
He out-worked and out-punched Tomasz Adamek, scoring a unanimous decision for an upset that represents a significant shuffle among heavyweights not named Wladimir Klitschko.

"I wasn't surprised because I felt I was controlling all of the fight and winning every single round," Glazkov (17-0-1, 11 KOs) told ringside media after scoring a 116-112, 117-110, 117-111 victory. "I didn't have experience to go to 12 rounds, which was missing in my game plan. But I learned during this bout."

In showing that he might become a contender and be one for a while, Glazkov, 29, pushed the 37-year-old Adamek (49-3, 29 KOs) toward the brink of retirement.

A five-fight win streak ended abruptly instead of in a title shot

"I don't know right now," a bloodied Adamek said when asked about his future.



JUAN MANUEL LOPEZ TKO 2 DANIEL PONCE DE LEON

March 15, Bayamon, Puerto Rico (Showtime)

★ Just when it looked as if Juan Manuel Lopez's career was in its final chapter and simply a punctuation point away from a disappointing end, he displayed surprising resilience with a victory that says there might be a lot more to his story.

In a career-saving fight, Lopez (34-3, 31 KOs) delivered a stunner, stopping Daniel Ponce de Leon (45-6, 35 KOs) at 2:44 of the second round in a junior lightweight bout. Lopez's triumph might prove to be a simple matter of style. In 2008, he scored a first-round stoppage of Ponce de Leon. Still, two losses to Orlando Salido and one to Mikey Garcia seemed to have put him on the scrap heap.

"Everybody had written me off, but I'm always going to be ready," Lopez told ringside media, after he'd gotten up from a knockdown and then floored Ponce de Leon twice in a wild second round.

Ready, Lopez said, for either Jorge Arce or a third fight with Salido. If style matters – and his victory over Ponce de Leon seems to say that it does, Lopez might be careful about that second wish. He made no mention of completing a trilogy with Ponce de Leon, who complained about the stoppage, saying that referee Luis Pabon waved it off even though only two punches in a 10-punch flurry from Lopez actually landed.

NO. 10 DEONTAY WILDER KO 1 MALIK SCOTT

March 15, Bayamon, Puerto Rico (Showtime)

★ Deontay Wilder's opponents have fallen like a row of dominoes, one right after another. The momentum continued with his first-round knockout of Malik Scott, just the latest notch in an astonishing run that is 31 fights in with 31 wins, all by knockout. The perfect record, which includes 18 stoppages within the first three minutes, raises inevitable questions. Has it been built on A) surreal power or B) careful matchmaking or C) soft opposition or D) all of the above?

At this point, D is probably the best answer, although it's hard to argue with C. By any stretch, Wilder's opponents aren't exactly a Murderer's Row. Scott seemed to go willingly at 1:36 of the first. It happened so quickly, there was talk that Scott (36-2-1, 13 KOs) took a dive. But video shows Wilder driving a right hand through Scott's defenses and then turning it for maximum impact as it lands like a well-aimed projectile. Say what you want about the opposition, Wilder can punch. Sometimes, he looks like the heavyweight version of Tommy Hearns.

"Heavyweights are running scared of me and I don't blame them," he said.

The lingering question is what happens when Wilder faces somebody who knows not to be afraid while also knowing how to elude a punch and how to counter one. That guy won't be just another domino.

C DANNY GARCIA MD 12 MAURICIO HERRERA

March 15, Bayamon, Puerto Rico (Showtime)

★ Danny Garcia's trip to his parents' home seemed like a good idea. It was a way to market himself as a Philadelphia fighter with Puerto Rican roots. But author Thomas Wolfe once warned that you can't go home. Not even your ancestral home.

Garcia escaped with his 140-pound title and unbeaten record intact, but not without doubts about whether he deserved the victory over Mauricio Herrera.

Nobody would have ever put Herrera in the class of Amir Khan or Lucas Matthysse. But he nearly did what they couldn't. Herrera threw more punches and left Garcia (28-0, 16 KOs) bruised and bloodied, yet lost a majority decision (116-112, 116-112 and 114-114). Many thought Herrera (20-4, 7 KOs) had done enough for an upset. On the cards, however, Garcia's power prevailed.

"I just needed to keep my composure and throw power shots," Garcia said

Herrera asked for a rematch, but Garcia talked as if he was headed up in weight to 147 and perhaps away from a fighter whose style might always give him trouble.

FIGHT RESULTS

THROUGH FIGHTS OF MARCH 16 (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Michael Wallisch KO 2 Frank Schadwill
Andrzej Wawrzyk TKO 5 Frans Botha
Deontay Wilder KO 1 Malik Scott
Vyacheslav Glazkov UD 12 Tomasz Adamek

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Glen Johnson TKO 4 Jaime Velasquez
Tony Conquest UD 12 Daniel Ammann
Jordan Shimmell TKO 3 Damon Reed
Yunier Dorticos TKO 1 Hamilton Ventura
Dennis Ronert SD 12 Shefat Isufi
Grigory Drozd KO 1 Jeremy Ouanna
Rakhim Chakhkiev TKO 9 Juho Haapoja
Tony Bellew KO 12 Valery Brudov

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Robert Berridge TKO 10 Kerry Foley
Hakim Zoulikha UD 10 Kevin Thomas Cojean
Johnny Muller SD 12 Willbeforce Shihepo
Ryno Liebenberg TKO 1 Joey Vegas
Zsolt Erdei UD 10 Shalva Jomardashvili
Isaac Chilemba UD 10 Denis Grachev

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Zac Dunn UD 10 Oscar Daniel Veliz
Hugo Kasperski TKO 4 Michael Recloux
Derek Edwards TKO 1 Badou Jack
Arthur Abraham SD 12 Robert Stieglitz
James DeGale TKO 11 Gevorg Khatchikian
Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. UD 12 Bryan Vera
Jose Uzcategui TKO 6 David Alonso Lopez
Rocky Fielding UD 12 Charles Adamu

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Paul Mendez KO 3 Raul Casarez
Daniel Geale TKO 6 Garth Wood
Martin Fidel Rios TKO 9 Juan Manuel Bonanni
J'Leon Love TKO 10 Vladine Biosse
(F) Christina HammerUD 10 Jessica Balogun
Akio Shibata UD 12 Daisuke Nakagawa
Adrian Luna Flores TKO 10 Rodrigo Mejia
Daniel Jacobs TKO 1 Milton Nunez
Dennis Hogan UD 10 Leroy Brown

British cruiserweight Tony Bellew (standing) knocked out Valery Brudov in the final round of their March 15 fight.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Takayuki Hosokawa MD 12 Tadashi Yuba
Saul Alvarez TKO 10 Alfredo Angulo
Patrick Teixeira KO Ignacio Lucero Fraga
Kell Brook TKO 8 Alvaro Robles

WELTERWEIGHTS

Ray Robinson UD 12 Aslanbek Kozaev
Pablo Cesar Cano TKO 9 Fernando Angulo
Charles Manyuchi TKO 8 Patrick Allotey
Kermit Cintron UD 10 Ronald Cruz

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

(F) Fernanda Soledad Alegre TKO 6 Marisol Reyes
Amir Imam TKO 4 Jared Robinson
Curtis Woodhouse SD 12 Darren Hamilton
Walter Castillo KO 2 Eugenio Lopez
Emmanuel Robles SD 10 Yordenis Ugas
Aik Shakhnazaryan KO 2 Alisher Rahimov
Danny Garcia MD 12 Mauricio Herrera

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Henry Lundy UD 10 Angelo Santana
Miguel Vazquez UD 12 Denis Shafikov
Miguel Roman KO 3 Enrique Tinoco
Abdiel Ramirez KO 8 Guadalupe Rosales
Tommy CoyleSD 12 Daniel Brizuela
(F) Erica Anabella Farias UD 10 Maria Eugenia Lopez
Paulus Moses UD 12 Cristian Rafael Coria
Terence Crawford UD 12 Ricky Burns
John Murray TKO 2 John Simpson
Juan Diaz UD 10 Gerardo Robles
Xolisani Ndongeni UD 12 Thompson Mokwana
Rustam Nugaev TKO 4 Marvin Quintero
Jorge Linares UD 10 Nihito Arakawa
Sergio Thompson UD 10 Ricardo Alvarez
Patricio Moreno KO 9 Jorge Martinez
Fernando Montiel MD 10 Cristobal Cruz

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Jerry Belmontes UD 10 Will Tomlinson
Francisco Vargas UD 10 Abner Cotto
Jasper Seroka W 12 Xolani Mcotheli
Luis Eduardo Flores TKO 1 Miguel Berchelt
Juan Manuel Lopez TKO 2 Daniel Ponce De Leon

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Marvin Sonsona KO 3 Akifumi Shimoda
(F) Jelena Mrdjenovich UD 10 Fatuma Zarika
Orlando Salido SD 12 Vasyl Lomachenko
Matias Rueda KO 7 Jorge Luis Rodriguez
Jorge Arce TKO 5 Aldimar Silva Santos
Carlos Zambrano KO 11 Devis Perez
Lusanda Komanisi TKO 5 Sabelo Nokhele

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Manuel Avila UD 10 Enrique Quevedo
Gavin McDonnell TKO 6 Leigh Wood
Genesis Servania TKO 12 Alexander Munoz
Albert Pagara KO 1 Isack Junior
Zsolt Bedak TKO 10 George Gachechiladze
Leo Santa Cruz UD 12 Cristian Mijares
Jonathan Oquendo UD 12 Guillermo Avila
Rey Vargas TKO 8 Silvester Lopez

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Ernesto Saulong UD 10 Mike Espanosa
Tepparith Singwancha KO 9 Alvin Bais
Alexis Santiago UD 10 Hanzel Martinez
Toto Helebe SD 12 Cebo Ngema
Lee Haskins TKO 2 Luke Wilton
Suriyan Sor Rungvisai KO 2 Jimmy Masangkay
Paul Butler KO 4 Oreste Bernabe Nieva

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Rex Tso TKO 8 Mako Matsuyama
(F) Mariana Juarez UD 10 Melissa McMorrow
Richie Mepranum TKO 4 Phupha Por Nobnom
Henry Maldonado KO 5 Bayardo Ramos
Bruno Escalante KO 4 Lorenzo Trejo
(F) Zulina Munoz TD 6 Alesia Graf
Arthur Villanueva UD 10 Fernando Aguilar

FLYWEIGHTS

Nawaphon Por Chokchai TKO 4 Shusong Zhuang
Luis Concepcion TD 9 Carlos Fontes
Roberto Domingo Sosa UD 10 Carlos Ariel Farias
Noknoi Sitthiprasert SD 12 Rajah Renoel Pael
Yodmongkol Vor Saengthep MD 12 Takuya Kogawa
Kevin Satchell UD 12 Isaac Quaye
Moruti Mthalane SD 12 Jether Oliva

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Muhammad Rachman TKO 12 Thongthailek Sor Tanapinyo
(F) Jessica Nery Plata UD 10 Maria Salinas
(F) Naoko Shibata UD 10 Guadalupe Martinez
Alberto Rossel UD 12 Gabriel Mendoza

STRAWWEIGHTS

Hekkie Budler KO 1 Karluis Diaz
(F atomweight) Ayaka Miyao KO 5
Buangern OnesongchaiGym
(F atomweight) Momo Koseki TKO 9
Angor Onesongchaigym

PREDICTIONS ARE MADE BY RING STAFF MEMBERS MICHAEL ROSENTHAL, DOUG FISCHER AND LEM SATTERFIELD.

APRIL

Bernard Hopkins (left) and Beibut Shumenov will each attempt to take the other's title on April 19.

BERNARD HOPKINS VS. BEIBUT SHUMENOV

April 19, DC Armory, Washington, D.C.

Division: Light heavyweights (title unification)

TV: Showtime

Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★ ★ ★

Also fighting: Shawn Porter vs. Paulie Malignaggi, welterweights (for Porter's IBF title); Peter Quillin vs. Lukas Konecny, middleweights (for Quillin's WBO title)

Significance: Hopkins (54-6-2, 32 KOs) recently turned 49 but continues to roll along, easily outpointing Tavoris Cloud and Karo Murat in 2013. Shumenov (14-1, 9 KOs) is inexperienced and somewhat crude, which seems to make him an ideal foil for this version of Hopkins.

Prediction: Rosenthal – Hopkins UD; Fischer – Hopkins UD; Satterfield – Hopkins SD.

WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO VS. ALEX LEAPAI

April 26, Oberhausen, Germany

Division: Heavyweights (for Klitschko's RING, IBF, WBO and WBA titles)

TV: None in U.S. at press time

Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★ ★ ★

Significance: Klitschko (61-3, 51 KOs) is making his 16th defense in his current reign as champ. He has won 19 consecutive fights, dating back to 2004. Leapai (30-4-3, 24 KOs), a squat, 34-year-old Samoan-Australian, earned the right to lose to Klitschko by outpointing Denis Boytsov.

Prediction: Rosenthal – Klitschko KO 9; Fischer – Klitschko KO 7; Satterfield – Klitschko KO 8

APRIL 19 – Scott Quigg vs. Nehomar Cermeno, junior featherweights, Manchester, England (AWE)

APRIL 19 – Anthony Crolla vs. John Murray, lightweights, Manchester, England (AWE)

APRIL 19 – Juan Francisco Estrada vs. Joebert Alvarez, flyweights (for Estrada's WBA and WBO flyweight titles), Mexico

APRIL 19 – Orlando Cruz vs. Gamalier Rodriguez, featherweights, Orlando, Fla. (UniMas)

APRIL 23 – Shinsuke Yamanaka vs. Stephane Jamoye, bantamweights (for Yamanaka's WBC title), Osaka, Japan

APRIL 23 – Kiko Martinez vs. Hozumi Hasegawa, junior featherweights (for Martinez's IBF title), Osaka, Japan

APRIL 24 – Josesito Lopez vs. Aaron Martinez, junior welterweights (ESPN2)

APRIL 26 – Lucas Matthysse vs. John Molina, junior welterweights, Carson, Calif. (Showtime)

APRIL 26 – Keith Thurman vs. Julio Diaz, welterweights, Carson, Calif. (Showtime)

APRIL 26 – Omar Figueroa vs. Jerry Belmontes, lightweights (for Figueroa's WBC title), Carson, Calif. (Showtime)

MAY

FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR. VS. MARCOS MAIDANA

May 3, MGM Grand, Las Vegas

Division: Welterweights (for Mayweather's RING, WBC and WBA titles)

TV: Showtime Pay Per View

Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★★

Also fighting: Amir Khan vs.Luis Collazo, welterweights; Adrien Broner vs. Carlos Molina, junior welterweights; J'Leon Love vs. Marco Antonio Periban, super middleweights

Significance: Mayweather (45-0, 26 KOs) seems to be as good as ever at 37, having dominated Robert Guerrero and Canelo Alvarez last year. Maidana (35-3, 31 KOs) earned this shot by thrashing Adrien Broner but, with limited skills and quickness, this isn't a good matchup for him.

Prediction: Rosenthal – Mayweather UD; Fischer – Mayweather UD; Satterfield – Mayweather UD

BERMANE STIVERNE VS. CHRIS ARREOLA

May 10, USC Galen Center, Los Angeles

Division: Heavyweights (for vacant WBC title)

TV: ESPN

Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★★★

Significance: The departure of Vitali Klitschko allows someone outside his family to win a title. Stiverne (23-1-1, 20 KOs) and Arreola (36-3, 31 KOs) met last year, with Stiverne winning a one-sided decision. Stiverne hasn't fought since. Arreola KO'd Seth Mitchell in one round in September.

Prediction: Rosenthal – Arreola UD; Fischer – Arreola MD; Satterfield – Stiverne SD

CARL FROCH VS. GEORGE GROVES

May 31, Wembley Stadium, London

Division: Welterweights (for Mayweather's RING, WBC and WBA titles)

TV: HBO

Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★★★

Significance: The fight is expected to draw in excess of 50,000 spectators, a testament to the drama of their first fight in November. Froch was hurt and struggled early but rallied to score a ninth-round TKO. Many – including Groves – believe it was stopped too soon. This will be fun.

Prediction: Rosenthal – Froch KO 7; Fischer – Froch TKO 8; Satterfield – Froch SD

MAY 1 – Robert Garcia vs. Victor Cayo, welterweights, Hialeah, Fla. (ESPN2)

May 2 – Erislandy Lara vs. Ishe Smith, junior middleweights, Las Vegas

May 3 – Arthur Abraham vs. Nikola Sjekloca, super middleweights (for Abraham's WBO title), Berlin

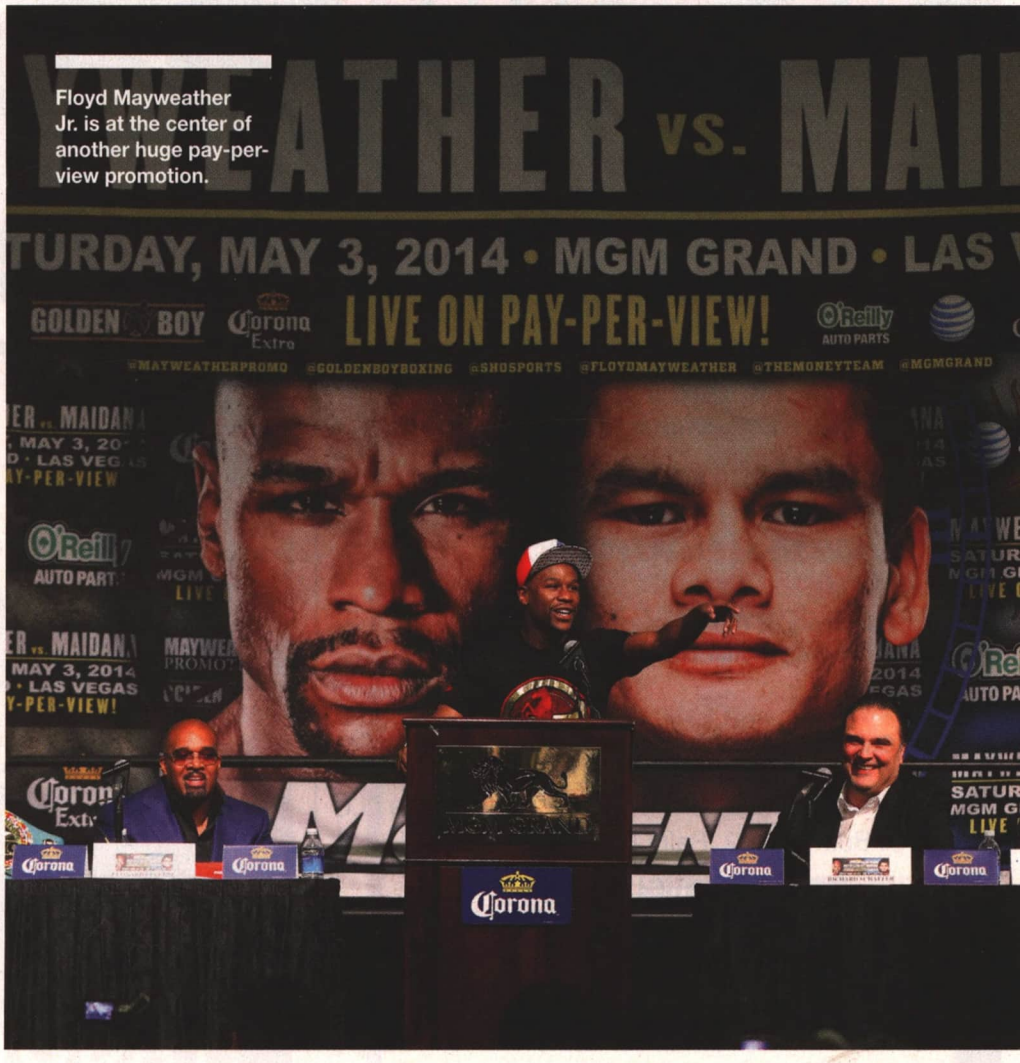
MAY 7 – Amnat Ruenroeng vs. Kazuto Ioka, flyweights (for Ruenroeng's IBF title), Osaka, Japan

MAY 7 – Katsunari Takayama vs. Shin Ono, strawweights (for Takayama's IBF title), Osaka, Japan

MAY 10 – Donnie Nietes vs. Moises Fuentes, junior flyweights (for Nietes' WBO title), Pasay City, Philippines

MAY 17 – Juan Manuel Marquez vs. Mike Alvarado, welterweights, Inglewood, Calif.

MAY 24 – Adonis Stevenson vs. Andrzej Fonfara, light heavyweights (for Stevenson's RING and WBC titles), Montreal (Showtime)



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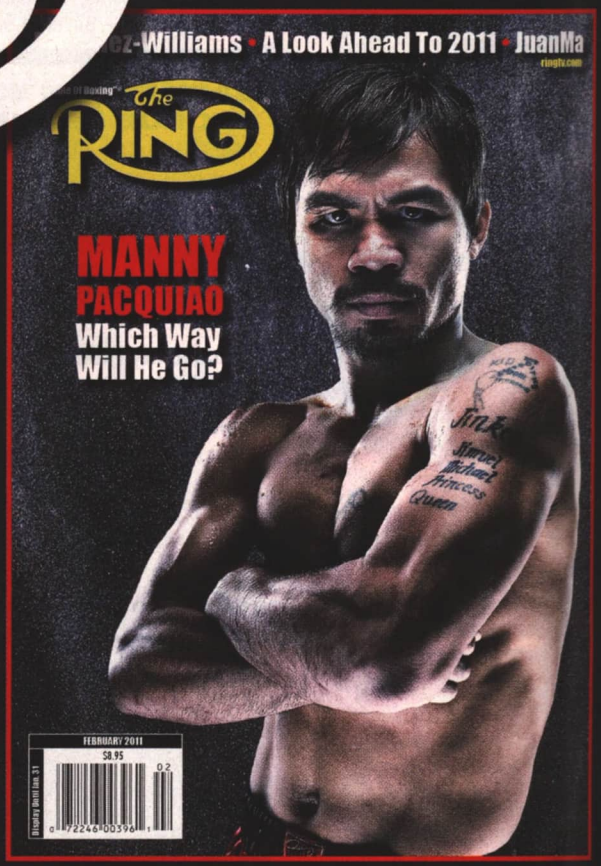

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— BOC Member José Chegüi Torres

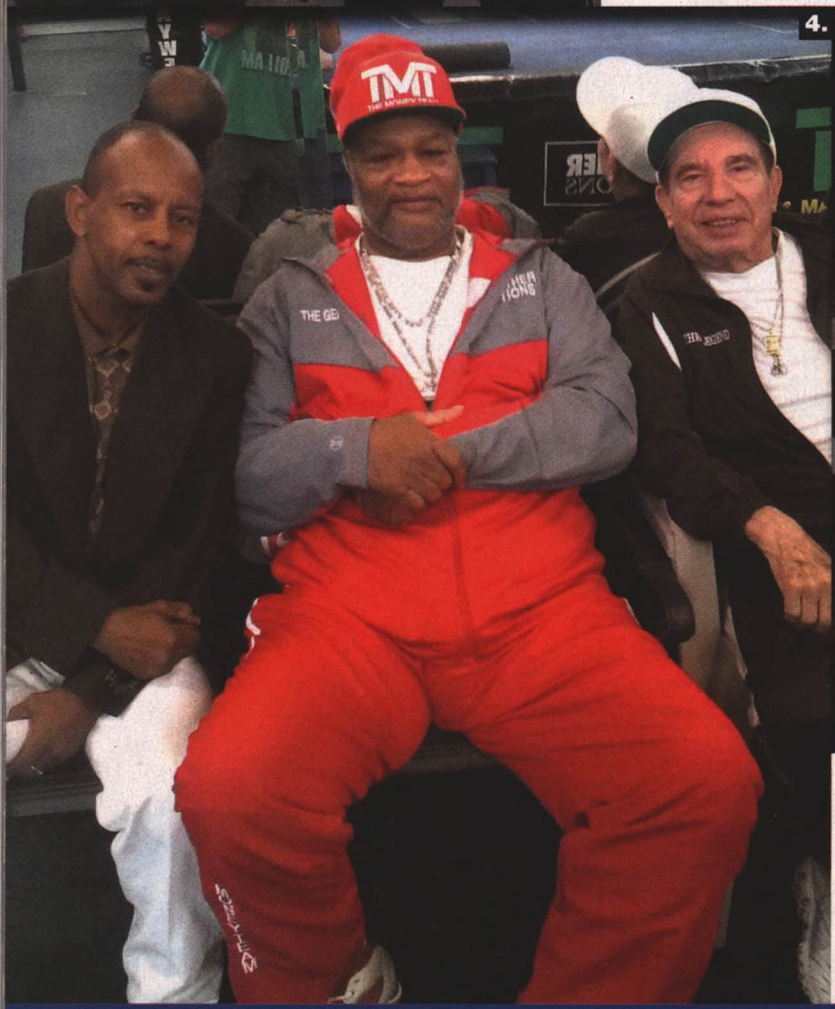
BACK IN THE DAY

The fighter on the right will be in Floyd Mayweather Jr.'s corner when the pound-for-pound king faces Marcos Maidana on May 3 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas. That's Floyd Sr., the superstar's father/trainer, landing a shot during his victory over Jose Baret in 1983 at the Felt Forum in New York City. Senior never reached the level of brother Roger or son Floyd Jr. but he was a good, quick-handed boxer who finished his career with a record of 28-6-1 (17 knockotus). Among his biggest fights were decision losses to two-time titleholder Marlon Starling and a 10th-round TKO loss to a young Sugar Ray Leonard in 1978. Leonard has said many times that the Mayweather fight wasn't an easy victory. Floyd Sr. stopped Baret in eight rounds, did the same to Calvin Porter in his next fight and then lost his last three bouts. As we know, he is a better trainer than he was a fighter. He has worked with some of the best boxers in the world, most notably his son, and is widely regarded as one of the best in the business.

Corona Extra BOXING

AT THE FIGHTS

1. Drew Spurgeon (left) is with his favorite magazine and trainer Floyd Mayweather Sr. at McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas; **2.** Adam Padzik (right) is with the ageless George Chuvalo at a recent amateur boxing event in Toronto. **3.** Yanina Casanova (right) is with Lucas Matthysse before Matthysse's fight against Danny Garcia in September. **4.** Vince Hudson (left) is with trainer Eddie Mustafa Muhammad and Floyd Mayweather Jr.'s cutman, Rafael Garcia, at the Mayweather Boxing Club in Las Vegas. **5.** Rainer Spadzinski (right) is with Arthur Abraham after the Juergen Braehmer-Marcus Oliveira fight in December in Neubrandenburg, Germany. **6.** Veronica Aldana is with trainer Robert Garcia at the weigh-in before a card in Garden City, Kan., in February.



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